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THE LONDON MERCURY

Vol. XXIV No. 142

AUGUST, 1931

EDITORIAL NOTES

IT was with the very greatest regret that we heard of the death, at the age of 67, of Mr. John Bailey, one of the wisest and most catholic critics of his time. Bailey was educated at Haileybury and New College. He was called to the Bar, and, in early life, he twice contested a constituency as a Conservative. He never lost his interest in affairs, but as time went on he increasingly occupied himself with writing and with those spheres of public, semi-political activity in which he rightly felt he was best qualified to do something worth doing. He was for years, and crucial years, the most active spirit in the English Association; and it would be impossible to estimate the services he performed on behalf of the National Trust, of which he was chairman. Something of his temperament and outlook might be deduced from those bare facts. No effort was too great for him which should serve either English language and literature or that rich, but precarious inheritance of ours, the English countryside, landscape, historic and beautiful buildings, and old times. There was nothing of the narrow patriot, still less of the jingo, about him. He was tolerant, curious, and universal in his interests. But, actively, he was chiefly preoccupied with the treasures of his own country; and would have echoed Tennyson's sentiment:

That man's the best cosmopolite
Who loves his native country best.

As a critic he wore his learning lightly, but not too lightly. He was clear and full of horse-sense: but, unlike many of the horse-sensible, he was not lacking in the fastidious appreciation of fine shades of both meaning and music. His little *Home University* book on *Johnson and his Circle* is the best short book on the subject extant; yet his *Milton*, in the same series, shows him as unfailingly percipient of the nuances of Milton's art as he was appreciative of the robustness of Johnson's character and the tough realism of his conversation and opinions. To write, after Walter Raleigh, a short book on Shakespeare was to challenge a dangerous comparison: Bailey did this (though diffidently and under pressure), and

his work successfully stood the comparison. But perhaps the book of all his books which best justified his admirers and most surprised those who were unaware of his full powers was the *Whitman* in the *English Men of Letters*. Whitman, the posing bravo, the raucous democrat, was, in large measure, just the person to repel the gentle and refined and conservative John Bailey, who was so sceptical of deliberate novelty and so repelled by noisy vulgarity. But he treated so understandingly those elements in his subject which were most alien from him, and disentangled so surely the great poet from the other Whitmans, that the book is the best study of Whitman extant. In person he gave an impression of eagerness and physical frailty. We have never known a kinder or a more unselfish man : however hard he was driven he never refused to help a cause which he thought he could help and deserved help.

W. R. Lethaby

RICHARD LETHABY was born at Barnstaple on January 18th, 1857. His father was a carver and gilder and frame-maker, one of the small craftsmen whose work, as he was pleased to remember, strengthened and enriched English provincial life. His gift and ability for drawing and design drew him towards architecture as a profession, and after some years of apprenticeship in Derby and Leicester he came to London, and having won the Soane Medallion and studentship, attracted the attention of Norman Shaw, entering his office as a paid assistant. Lethaby's influence may be seen in the design of New Scotland Yard, one of the last works undertaken by Norman Shaw, as well as in other works coming from the same office, of which No. 180 Queen's Gate, built for Mr. F. A. White, was one. After twelve years with Norman Shaw, for whom and for whose constant kindness and geniality he had the greatest respect and affection, he began working independently, building several notable houses which were marked by a subtle feeling for beauty and a resolute commonsense. Living in London at No. 4 Gray's Inn Square, he came, through Ernest Gimson, to know William Morris and Morris' lifelong friend Philip Webb, the architect. Philip Webb was living near by, at Raymond Buildings, and Lethaby was soon his constant and intimate friend.

His Attitude towards Architecture—

HIS chosen profession of Architecture held him for a while, and at this time from among his contemporaries he gathered round him a devoted group of life-long friends. He had begun even then to throw new light on the study of Architecture, bringing to all round him an enthusiasm and a fresh outlook that took hold rapidly and has gone on growing steadily since. He, first of our time, showed us architecture as primarily work done to need and necessity with local understanding of materials and circumstance. From this time onwards he became the acknowledged leader towards his ideals of modern building : " All our pre-occupations about styles block the way, not only to high utility but to high expression." This lead was recognised and greatly enlarged by his appointment to the

L.C.C. School of Arts and Crafts of which he became first Principal about 1896. To have laid here the foundations, of which he alone then understood the full meaning, so soundly as he did, is witness to a strength of vision and purpose seldom met with. In 1906 he became Surveyor to the Fabric of Westminster Abbey, a post he held for twenty-one and a half years. Throughout this time of great responsibility he held to his own and William Morris' conviction that the best work here was to keep the building clean and leave it alone. What the cleaning has done for the Abbey needs to be seen to be appreciated, so much of its marvellous beauty has it brought into view.

And to England

DURING all the time of his more public and official work he was a close student of ancient and modern life, more especially in their relation to the Arts. His lectures and written contributions to magazines, and his published books kept bringing more and more into the light, not only profound things about Architecture and the Arts, but also, and this became perhaps the chief concern and desire of later years, putting forth at all opportunities stirring appeal and challenge on behalf of an England that he saw neglected and abused—"not a land to exploit, but a garden we can live in." He longed ardently to see especially country life refounded among the people "on the common and the general rather than on the propaganda way." "To bring back to the people pride in work, is what is obviously necessary." The absence from National Councils, and from Parliament especially, of sincere feeling for Labour as "a great function of our common Life" as "the way of evolution and creation" in a word at the absence of any belief in "the spirit of full and happy labour" alarmed him like an impending tragedy.

His Dicta

MUCH of the discredit brought on Labour he attributed to "book education." By teaching through books "we have gone near the creation of a psychological hatred of Labour." In one of the last talks with him he had been thinking over Religion and disabilities :

Life is Religion. [he said] This we call religion is goodness and love and desire to help. The gospels were written one after another and became gradually an organised ecclesiasticism—with a priesthood, and now this enormous control. Religion as preached and taught has always seemed to be an obstruction to me—all *turnpikes*—thirty-nine and more ! What we have to do is to make them put away their turnpikes and be helping.

Other of his sayings will perhaps give further insight into a character so baffling to describe :

Work and Food are never mentioned by teachers of Religion and Ideals. 'Tis all in the region of words—Steal and go to Heaven !

The young want intelligible ambitions in Life.

After long familiarity with Art Schools and their commonly vague methods of teaching, he said, sympathising with the students :

It is like learning to swim in a thousand lessons, without water.

A propos of "Art"-language and Press criticism :

Art was what they did before they knew about it.

Asked to enter the public controversy over the Abbey Sacristy he refused:

I am like the family butler and keep the family secrets.

I fear and *hate* machinery, but while we use it, it must be neat. I can't go on using railways and pretending they don't exist.

Of Ruskin :

Everything is in him. All that we are and think, but in long language and queer kinks, because he was like that.

He married in or about the year 1900, Edith Crosby, an American lady, and taking a house in Inverness Terrace he lived there till his death on July 17th of this year.

Picasso

AT the Lefevre Galleries there has been held an exhibition covering a period of thirty years of paintings by Pablo Picasso, the famous Parisian artist of Spanish birth and the co-inventor with Braque of the "abstract" painting which goes by the name of Cubism. For many years Picasso's has been a name that is conjured with by connoisseurs and critics in all countries, and a leading newspaper in London on the occasion of the present exhibition acclaimed him as another Raphael. Picasso is, it was said, the greatest and most representative painter of the time, and it was pointed out how each of the phases of Picasso's art has been taken up and imitated by a host of disciples throughout the world. Picasso is a master not of one but of many schools. These are big claims, and they have been scarcely justified by the present exhibition which, although only on a small scale, included well-known pieces representing most of the phases of the artist's work. It is quite true that apart from the early works, which are of a normal representational character, Picasso's paintings constitute an intellectual challenge. They make us think furiously about art. But do they make us feel?

Early Work

THE most noteworthy feature of the early work is its highly literary character and a slight morbidity of sentiment. Picasso displays a comparative paucity of sensuous reactions to the external world. He has no interest in landscape: the sole painting in the exhibition with any real landscape in it has a very early and indifferent imitation of Gauguin and Pissarro. There is no reason why he should be a landscape painter, but the fact is noted as indicating that the passage to so-called abstract painting was at least not hindered by any superfluity of sensuous impressions. Picasso's sensibility is rather that of a sculptor. Further the emphasis in the representational paintings of what is known as the Blue Period is on the "meaning" of the figures. Neither the colour nor the forms are particularly striking. They are by no means unpleasant, and there is a dignity and

reticence about them which denote a powerful intellect at work, but we pass quickly from a consideration of the colour and form to the psychological situation. And that is a trifle morbid and empty.

Cubism

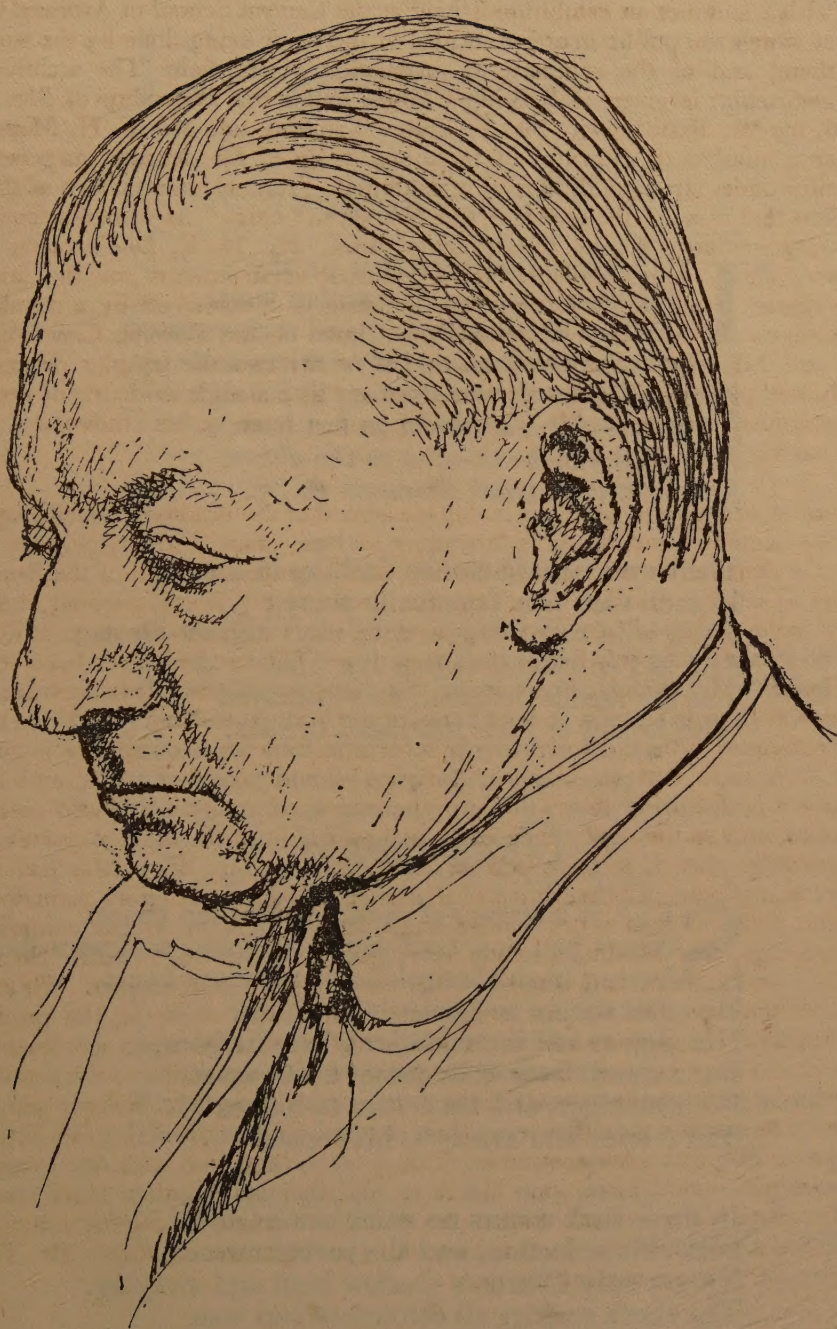
THE change to the free cubist pattern seems to have been effected through an elaboration and distortion of Cezanne's emphasis of the third dimension. This transitional phase was represented in the exhibition by a painting entitled *Woman with Pears*. The "planes" of the face had suffered from an earthquake of obscure origin. There still remains so strong an element of representation in the picture that the arbitrary distortions are a source of disquiet. Frequently in the developed cubist work virtually the only representational element left is in the title. This misleads the lay mind into treating the painting as a riddle to be solved ; whereas in most cases the painting should be regarded as a pattern and the simple question asked : is it a good pattern ? To ask such a question of course removes the intellectual challenge of the work which relies partly on the mystifying confusion of representation with pure pattern. As patterns Picasso's cubist paintings are not very successful : they are far too much of an intellectual puzzle. But there is another class of cubist work which cannot be regarded as a pure pictorial pattern because of its sculptural emphasis. The painter has imagined a series of sculptured forms—pure forms in the sense that they do not completely resemble anything in reality—and has then painted them more or less in monochrome. A good example of this is a picture entitled *Abstraction*. One cannot help likening the object depicted either to an immense jawbone, or to a false tooth plate. Of course it is neither, it is just a collection of shapes. The representation is not of an object in reality but of an imagined sculptural form. If we look at these paintings quite dispassionately and without theoretical bias one way or the other, the most that we feel about them is that they are unobjectionable and in places quite pleasant. That is not the reaction to a modern Raphael. After the war Picasso reverted for a time to realism and produced a series of massive figure paintings betraying a slight classical influence. Their significance, however, is not in any revival of the antique, but in the stressing of plastic volumes which is the explanation of the swollen limbs of the figures. Again, a current aesthetic doctrine has been put into practice with remorseless and unhesitating logic, and again there is an intellectual challenge combined with an uncertainty of feeling. It is the logic of Picasso's work which impresses with its directness and attracts with its complete absence of distracting features. But appeal to theory is not appeal to the imagination. That such work should exercise a great influence in an age of intense aesthetic speculation is only to be expected. But the fact of this undoubted influence does not necessarily imply great artistic achievements. The propagation of "isms" is a very different thing from the creation of art.

LITERARY INTELLIGENCE

EVERY summer an exhibition is held at the Central School of Arts and Crafts at which the public may get an idea of the work being done by the students there, and of the standard of instruction given them. The architectural instruction is given at Evening Classes, under the leadership of Mr. S. B. Caulfield, by Mr. Basil Oliver, Mr. E. Fraser Tomkins and Mr. F. H. Mansford. This year a number of drawings of buildings designed for definite purposes and definite sites under strict conditions were exhibited. From an examination of these it was evident that it is not the object of this School to "cram" its students for architectural examinations. Among the students' work, Mr. H. E. Doe's plans for a Secondary School were excellent, having unusual arrangements for the lavatory accommodation, whereby the scale of the building is undisturbed by a number of small windows. There were two designs for a hotel on the Cornish Coast by Mr. Hawkes and Mr. Slade. Both were good, but of the two the simpler design was unusually well planned. The instructions given at this School is evidently of the kind that is practically useful, as Mr. Caulfield says that none of his students is now without work.

IT looked at one time as if the war had made an end of the Bradfield Greek Play, but now this admirable institution is firm upon its base again. Firmer, perhaps, than ever, for the demand for tickets went far beyond the generosity even of the Bradfield authorities to satisfy. And Dr. Gray's theatre, always lovely, is still growing in loveliness: ivy, paint, and good taste have improved the once rather shoddy stage-buildings, and the dresses are infinitely better than they were. The eye has never been so well satisfied before. Mr. Douglas Fox's music, too, has come to stay. It is far from easy, but those who know it best like it most: only in the brief recessional Mr. Alden might consider returning to the old score, in which for a moment Dr. Rowton was genuinely inspired. It is right that in *Antigone*, Antigone should take first place, and R. N. Rayne gave a performance that will hardly be improved upon: a splendid presence, a good voice, and an unusually wide emotional range. Both the other women's parts were beautifully played, and, we believe, by the same actor. W. J. Marshall was a most interesting Creon, a rather thin and acid ruler, who grew in dignity as misfortune smote him, and ended as a profoundly tragic figure. William Archer complained, many years ago, that Bradfield acting never gave him the tragic thrill. He could hardly have said so if he had witnessed this most moving performance. We cannot mention all the cast, but we can congratulate them, and above all the producer, Mr. C. Bellamy. His performance in the *Rhesus* at Oxford a few years ago deserves to be historic, and since he took charge at Bradfield he has even added to the reputation of an institution that stands by itself in the drama of our time. Mr. Bellamy allows his actors to let themselves go rather more than did Mr. Vince: the acting is a little less statuesque, a little more demonstrative. This is all to the good, with one exception. The messengers would have done better to tell their story rather more straightforwardly; there was too much studied movement, too much seeking for variety, and the effect was a trifle restless. In that alone did one regret the old days: Mr. Vince's messengers were always particularly good.

WE very much regret that in the Natural History chronicle in our July number the title and publisher of Commander Gould's book on the sea-serpent were omitted. The book is *The Case for the Sea-Serpent*, and it is published by Messrs. Philip Allan & Company at 12s. 6d.



E. V. LUCAS
By Powys Evans

POETRY

FOUR POEMS

The Amazons

THE inextinguishable sun ; a sky
 Of brass over the Abyssinian waste.
 Hills to the south, arid and rock-encased
 For months are tired and torrentless and dry.
 Born of the sand, and drifting like a sigh
 A column-cloud advances in hot haste ;
 And all the rocks re-echo as the chaste
 And stormy-hearted Amazons go by.

Their eyes like diamonds flashing in a mine
 In each dark face fanatically shine ;
 Their wild hair mingles with their helmet-crests ;
 And as Penthesilea swings her blade
 The foe recoils defeated, and dismayed
 With horror at their mutilated breasts.

Underworld

STYX is a stream of sadder tides than those
 Where you now trail your hands and cool your feet
 Among fresh marigolds and meadow-sweet.
 Upon its shores no flower ever grows,
 Nor sign to tell the traveller where he goes,
 But a dumb waterman comes up to meet
 His passenger, and leads him to his seat,
 And ferries him across to his repose.

In these dark waters no vainglorious swan
 Seeks his reflection, and the turbid stream
 Knows only Charon's shadow bent and swaying.
 The shore recedes all colourless and wan
 And the pale stranger hears as in a dream
 The hound across the river faintly baying.

The Scapegoat

BURDENED with great iniquity and pain
 In the vast wilderness of human scorn,
 The scapegoat travels on to meet the dawn
 Another outcast yet, another Cain.
 No herdsmen claim him now, from him in vain
 All pasture-lands and bright sweet streams are torn,
 And leader's bells, and struggles horn to horn
 In the green valleys of his old domain.

In some precipitous ravine of stones
 He stumbles on his predecessor's bones
 Pale sepulchre of unresisted blame ;
 Then idly, where a few sparse grasses grow
 He crops the stunted thistles of his woe
 And drinks the brackish waters of his shame.

The Flowers

GO not into the garden, for they sleep,
 The dew-drenched evening swings them to her heart.
 And their pale heads hang drowsily and keep
 (Following the insect-murmur of the day)
 The tune and traffic of uncounted bees.
 Already dreaming, see they cast away
 All thought of gardens, and the gentle breeze
 Fans them along to visit in the fields
 Their shy wild sisters of a poorer soil ;
 To envy them their pastoral liberty
 And bright felicity.

While some in dreams explore the ocean-bed
 And are transported thither in all speed
 To trail their oozy petals garlanded
 Through glaucous caverns where amongst the weed
 They bow and wave and quiver in the stream.

Go not into the garden, for they dream.

YVONNE FFRENCH

“*Young Blood*”

HAVING been asked by various friends to write
 Some things about my early youth which might
 Amuse as well as be of interest,
 I cheerfully accede to the request,
 Adding some salt to what I have to tell
 By telling it in downright doggerel.

I

Well—I was born in eighteen-hundred-fifty.
 My parents, not well off, but strong and thrifty,
 Hailed the arrival of the child with joy,
 Particularly as I was a boy.
 Of my first years—but stop, I think I should
 (It’s always done) say where “my cradle stood.”
 I never read a Life that’s any good
 Which does not tell you where “the cradle stood.”
 Mine, then, it stood in Breslau, far away,
 An ancient town, once under Poland’s sway.
 My father—let me briefly mention it—
 Was born a Pole, with Polish grace and wit ;
 My mother, kind, religious, full of life,
 Made him a truly exemplary wife.
 They both loved music, knowing what it meant,
 Though neither of them played an instrument.
 And voices, too, they had, charming to hear,
 But what they sang, they only sang by ear.
 Of my first years there’s nothing much to say,
 Except, of course, I grew from day to day
 Until ’twas time to send me to a school
 Where I remember sitting on a stool
 Trying to listen, open-mouthed, perplexed,
 And wond’ring what the teacher would do next,
 And why, in “*Kindergardens*” there should be
 No flowers of any kind that I could see.
 At home my mother tried to teach me too,
 To read, to write, what *not* and *what* to do,
 From picture-blocks that had been giv’n to me
 I was supposed to learn the ABC.
 Now you may think ’twould have amused me ? Ah, no !
 What *did* attract me was the old piano
 Which stood in “the good chamber” of our flat ;
 Whene’er I could escape, I’d run to that ;

On tiptoe raised to reach the keys I stood,
 Hitting them hard, until one day I could
 Distinguish them by sound and shouted, " Mother—
 I can make tunes—look here—I've made another ! "
 And, after that, each week a man did call
 To teach me notes and clefs and rests and all.
 Soon I could tell a crotchet from a minim,
 And then they said, " The boy has got it in him ! "
 So to a music-school I was despatched
 To which I soon grew very much attached ;
 I sang and played and tried to do my best,
 (Perhaps a little talent did the rest)
 With the result that in the course of things
 I sang the solo in *O for the Wings*
 When I was nine, and then, without much labour,
 When twelve, I played the *Concertstück*, by Weber.
 About that time I madly fell in love
 With my fair mistress of the school above.
 Her lovely face, her golden curly hair,
 Her gentle voice—'twas more than I could bear.
 I truly loved her, wished she were my wife,
 I was eleven, she was thirty-five.
 For her it was that I composed ere long
 My first, most passionate, most tender song.

Well, things went on and soon the time drew near
 When I'd be asked to think of a career.
 That my good people hoped I would become
 A business man and meekly stay at home
 I long had known, so was not unprepared
 For a fierce fight, though not the least bit scared ;
 My case was clear, I had but one ambition :
 I would, I must, I *shall* be a musician.
 The fight did come—well I recall the day—
 And at the end, of course, I had my way.
 I left the school, took leave of friend and foe,
 And now the question, " Whither should I go ? "
 Of famous music-schools the best by far
 Was then the Leipzig Conservatoire.
 Enquiries there were met with prompt response,
 So 'twas to Leipzig I should go at once.
 Only a fortnight more and off I'd be . . . !
 That fortnight seemed a century to me.
 With loving care and many a silent tear,
 As if that wooden box had been my bier,

My mother packed it full with boots and shoes
 And clothes and all the things I'd have to use ;
 In fact made most elaborate preparation
 For my sojourn among a foreign nation.
 Yes, "foreign," for in Leipzig everything
 Was foreign : money, postage stamps, e'en King.
 How wonderful I thought 'twould seem, to be
 All of a sudden independent, free
 To do whate'er I would, and in a town
 As yet unknown, but of as great renown
 As Leipzig, where the spirits of great men
 Still hovered in the air ; where now and then
 You'd find yourself close to a place of fame :
 " Here Goethe stayed when he from Frankfurt came,
 And here, in Auerbach's Keller, he caroused
 With fellow-students, dreaming of his *Faust*."
 Or " In this house Bach trained his choir-boys ;
 This is the Church in which the glorious noise
 Of organ, chorus, orchestra resounded
 On Sunday mornings to the joy unbounded
 Of those who flocked to hear and see the man,
 Their famous cantor, great Sebastian ! "
 Can you imagine what this all did mean
 To me, a boy of barely seventeen ?
 At last the day arrived. 'Mid hopes and fears,
 Embraces, kisses, wishes, smiles and tears
 I left my childhood's home, with but one aim :
 To study hard—to make myself a name.

* * *

II

The train was full, but very far from fast ;
 It seemed an age before we heard at last
 The guard call out, " LEIPZIG—ALL CHANGE " . . .
 " Excited "
 Hardly describes my state as we alighted,
 Father and I, and walked without delay
 To a small hostelry across the way ;
 We both were ready for a little bite
 And, after that, retired for the night.
 'Twas all so new, so different, so strange—
 The guard was right when he had called, " All change."

* * *

A modest lodging soon was found for me
 And there was no more reason we could see
 Why Father any longer should remain,
 So the next morning by an early train
 He left. I still can see the anxious look
 In his dear face as final leave we took.
 No wonder : here was I, left among strangers,
 Alone, exposed to Heaven knows what dangers.
 The last few minutes that remained were spent
 Almost in silence, doubly eloquent.
 One more embrace, one more kind exhortation,
 And slow the train now steams out of the station.
 A deep, long whistle, sounding like a moan,
 The train is out of sight—I am alone.

* * *

Work now commenced in deadliest earnestness.
 For piano I was sent to Moscheles,
 One of the famous pianists of the time,
 Though then, as such, no longer in his prime.
 But what a thrill it was that Fate had woven
 For me : taught by a man who knew Beethoven !

Professor Moscheles kept open house,
 Presided over by his charming spouse,
 A lady, highly cultured and refined,
 In whom all female virtues seemed combined.
 Soon at their house I was a weekly guest,
 Finding amusement there as well as rest.
 Frau Moscheles remained my warmest friend
 Through many years to come, until her end.
 I little thought that she—wasn't it odd ?—would
 Together with her old friend Walter Broadwood
 Be instrumental, barely ten years thence,
 In bringing me to England, to commence
 The new and richer life that was awaiting
 Me over there—but I'm anticipating.
 Back then to Leipzig on the wings of thought,
 Where in the various subjects I was taught
 I made good progress. With my singing-master,
 Professor Goetze*, I got on much faster
 Than he had dared to hope ; and so it came
 That soon I was allowed to see my name
 In print, on programmes. (In a modest way,
 But then, it was yet early in the day.)

*Once quite a famous tenor, who had been
 The first to sing the part of Lohengrin.

About that time there flourished in the town
A Choral Union of just renown,
Conducted by a rabid Wagnerite.
Well, this good man, Carl Riedel, came, in spite
Much adverse criticism and derision
To the at last unshakable decision
To teach the town that Wagner was sublime,
By far the greatest genius of the time—
A thing by no means easy then to do,
When still to thousands Wagner was taboo.
Just then the *Mastersingers* had been done
In Dresden for the first time ; I had gone
To hear the work which I thought full of beauty,
Whilst anti-Wagnerites deemed it their duty
To show ill-feeling and but little tact
By loudly hissing after every act.
The Leipzig people were not very keen,
Since Dresden hardly a success had been,
To stage th'expensive work at once, so they
Deferred production to a later day,
Which made old Riedel fly into a rage :
“ Begad, I’ll do it on the concert-stage ”,
He swore, “ no settings, costumes, just as though
It were a sort of oratorio ! ”
He did it—sorry, can’t recall the date,
But it was still in eighteen-sixty-eight.
He first of all secured his soloists,
Consulting the conservatory’s lists,
And thus it was I got my first good start,
For I was cast to sing Hans Sachs’s part.
How thrilled the five of us were, as we met
To read for the first time—can I forget ?—
That wonderful, that glorious quintet !
Rehearsals now were soon in fullest swing
And nearly ev’ryone knew ev’rything
Almost by heart. Th’excitement was intense.
Then came the concert. . . . *What* an audience !
No seat unoccupied. Some people stand—
Riedel appears, surveying choir and band—
Now silence, then a gentle tap—at last
The concert has begun—The die is cast.
At first the people didn’t seem to know
Whether to like that sort of thing or no ;
Then by degrees the humour and the charm
Took hold of them and they began to warm ;

Some even dared to show their approbation
 By now and then a timid exclamation.
 The quintet left them more and more enraptured
 Till at the end they were completely captured ;
 They clapped and clapped and shouted with delight—
 It was a truly memorable night.
 And Riedel ? Well, he too was quite delighted.
 Of course, in England he would have been knighted.

Dear, honoured shade, to thee I send this greeting,
 And here is to our next and happy meeting !

* * *

From what I had achieved so far, one might
 Presume that I had worked from morn till night ?
 Dear Reader, do not for a moment think
 That I was ever even *near* the brink
 Of nervous breakdown, caused by too much study.
 Far, far from it. My cheeks kept round and ruddy,
 Nor did I, like the Asra in the song,
 Grow pale and paler as I went along.
 Alas, I fear I took good care that play
 Should alternate with work 'most every day.
 Old Leipzig was so terribly attractive,
 It kept one ever occupied and active.
 (" A little Paris, Goethe calls it once,
 A town, which moulds and educates her sons.)
 Moreover youth, unbound, is apt to waste
 Much precious time once it has had a taste
 Of pleasant things, far nicer than to stay
 At home at night and work throughout the day !
 Tonight it's Bülow, playing the piano,
 On Sunday *Freischütz* with a new soprano,
 On Monday—hardly time to take a breath—
 Franz Liszt conducts his *Saint Elizabeth*,
 A friend drops in to take you for a walk
 Or for a ride on horseback, or to talk
 About the circus or some other show,
 Most likely ending with a " Come, let's go ! "
 Work is put off with " can't's " and " would's " and
 " may be's "—
 You know the song from Kingsley's *Waterbabies* :
 " Young blood must have its course, lad "—charming line—
 " And every dog his day " ?
 Well—I had mine.

GEORGE HENSCHERL

Waste !

IT'S very hot to-night and very still,
 As we lie
 Silently looking
 At the carven clouds
 Of the sky,
 At the lights on the opposite hill.
 The chiselled garden trees,
 The laurels'
 High black walls
 Remember now
 The quarrels
 We used to have before,
 In other times than these,
 When we still could care,
 When words were said in haste,
 Angry lovers' quarrels,
 Merely now a waste
 Of tears.
 Just a pair
 Of strangers we lie
 Looking up at the sky.
 Like an open magnolia flower
 Your face now turns
 Towards me,
 And your scent is just as cloying
 As the blooms of the tree.
 I loved you for an hour,
 As one loves any flower,
 Your scent was your power.
 The hot night air has opened
 The heart
 Of the nicotine,
 The closed lips
 Of the jasmine ; the dart
 Of a firefly hits
 The moon-flowers' fragile tips,
 And like fireflies shine your eyes
 Opened wide in surprise
 That I lie there so cold.
 That you do not love me,
 That's understood,
 In your own queer logic,
 It does me good,
 But you hate to have lost your hold.
 To-night I somehow resent
 All the love that I spent
 On you.

HERE I HAVE LIVED

By DAVID HORNER

IN every quarter of London there are to be found certain streets and squares, which, either from their obvious superiority over the adjoining ones, or from their own character, inevitably fill the leisurely passer-by with a desire to possess a house in one of those enviable places. Alas, nowadays, it is regretfully to be admitted that, encased as they are, in cages of glass and metal, men and women are rushed hither and thither, unable to catch more than a glimpse of any static object, as if each thing were seen by the brief flash of a magnesium wire. Only, therefore, the poor, the wise or the energetic can fully appreciate the increasingly rare delight of finding an early-eighteenth-century house still standing in the corner of some commonplace square, surrounded by brick-faced Victorian mansions or hiding modestly under the shadow of an enormous, pseudo-American building.

Mrs. Ravine lived in Oldbury Street; one of those pleasant streets to which we have referred, situated near two busy, noisy thoroughfares, but itself being quiet, unfrequented and dignified. Her house was inconspicuous, although the careful observer would immediately realize how graceful were its proportions and how harmonious the dully-glowing red bricks. The breadth of doorway, the shallowness of step and the wrought-iron torch-extinguishers, reminiscent of the tall, pointed hats worn by witches, gave a clue—if necessary—to the date of the houses: for apart from one or two modern interlopers, the street was a solid remnant of the eighteenth century.

I had always thought of Mrs. Ravine's house as a stronghold, a safe retreat. In fact when, as a child, I was learning to read, the word "stronghold"—generally associated with feudal castles or impregnable fortresses—automatically brought to my mind a picture of Mrs. Ravine's house, protected in that quiet backwater of London from all attacks of modern improvements.

Mrs. Ravine was a woman about whom people said that she had always known "everyone worth knowing." But when I heard this well-worn phrase being repeated, I added to myself, "also a great many people not worth knowing." For with Mrs. Ravine, as with most others, there were a few people she cherished without, to my mind, any adequate reason. At the time with which this story deals she must have been about seventy-five, and though the yellowing parchment face betrayed her age, this was fully compensated for by her great activity and vigorous intelligence.

I could remember Mrs. Ravine ever since my childhood, and as I grew up she had become fond enough of me to consider herself as my adopted godmother. In spite of the difference in our ages we had always been intimate friends, and I had seen many crises in her life and watched the subtle reaction of her sentiments and the working of her acute brain.

She had made a good marriage, in the sense that she was herself the heiress of a rich North-country manufacturer, whereas her husband was the impoverished owner of an extensive property in Norfolk, which had belonged to the Ravines ever since the Norman Conquest. In fact only in the nineteenth century had the family name been changed from de Ravin ; owing, no doubt, to an acute attack of Francophobia, a disease from which even now the English are only just recovering. Mrs. Ravine had been obliged, during the lifetime of her husband, to spend more time than she cared to at the house in Norfolk, as Edward Ravine had been rather more occupied with the breeding of prize pigs than in acting as host at his wife's luncheon parties in London. Whenever Charlotte Ravine complained to her husband that existence in Norfolk was boring, adding, to strengthen her argument, that without her money he would never have been able to breed his beloved pigs, he replied, with an uncommon flash of intelligence, that without his name and background she would never have achieved the distinctive position she now held.

Edward Ravine had been dead for twenty-five years, and I can only just recall that as a child I heard him explain to someone that he was an "old-fashioned Whig"; which remark puzzled me considerably as I looked at his bald and shining head. After his death, Charlotte Ravine stayed more than ever in London. Owing to the amount of time she had been forced to spend in Norfolk against her will, now nothing could persuade her to move from London, and even there she infinitely preferred to receive her friends at her own home. Thus she became so closely associated with her house that I never thought of her in any other setting than those eighteenth-century rooms, tempered by the past influence of Morris and Burne-Jones, and moderated by more recent, though perhaps less successful, decorators.

In this modernised eighteenth-century background Mrs. Ravine had reigned in her own right for the last twenty-five years. There were almost daily luncheon, dinner and tea-parties, and it was my habit when in London, to visit her house very often, though only on rare occasions was she to be found by herself.

I had been away from London for several weeks, and on returning my first thought was to see Mrs. Ravine as soon as possible. It happened to be a Thursday, on which day she was always at home for tea, and I decided to go late in the afternoon with the hope of seeing her alone for a few moments. On my way to Oldbury Street I had to cross an innocent-looking, but in reality trap-like, square ; trap-like in the sense that, as I was half way across the stretch of petrol-stained road, a large, black motor suddenly appeared coming round the corner with no warning except the scream of its brakes as the chauffeur pulled up within a few yards of my quaking body.

"Darling, do be more careful, or. . . ."

This surprising greeting came through the window of the car, and having recovered from my fright, I realized that the unwilling aggressor was Lady Inchell.

"Surely," I replied, "that injunction should have been addressed to the driver; but please let me get in, because I'm shaking from head to foot."

"Yes, do get in, I'm going to see Charlotte Ravine, and you? . . . Yes, I thought so, we can drive there together. When did you get back, and was everything lovely? But I'm sure it was, because you always have such a delicious time."

Lady Inchell's conversation flowed on quite unaided until, as we arrived at Mrs. Ravine's house, she said: "I think Charlotte is worried about something, do try and find out if there is anything the matter. I can't think what it can be, but I have the feeling that there is *something*."

Lady Inchell was inclined to exaggeration, but this time it seemed to me that she was genuinely distressed, and so, assuring her that I would do my best to discover what was the matter, we went into the house.

The drawing-room was still full of people, but Mrs. Ravine called me aside, and told me to stay and talk to her after the others had gone. There was nobody I wanted very much to see, but overhearing Lady Inchell start a dressmaking conversation with Mrs. Mandeville, I could not resist eavesdropping.

"Oh, but darling," Lady Inchell was saying, "Peppercorn is too wonderful: he just takes the stuff and drapes you, and then the dress is ready. I feel that even alpaca would melt to velvet in his hands."

"But, Katie, dear," replied Mrs. Mandeville, "I'm too heavy for that, I think."

"Of course you *are* fat, Daisy, darling, and Peppercorn won't have that; he says line counts so much."

"Darling, is it quite kind to call me fat? After all, perhaps it is better not to be entirely skin and bone—and such very angular bone too."

Feeling that my opinion as umpire would soon be needed, I turned to Ruby Halbury, who was complaining as usual about the treatment she had to bear from her mother.

"And mind you, when I came in at three in the morning with my mouth as dry as an old boot, not only did mother hear me, but she got up, and came down, and stopped my getting a drink. Darling, will you be a poppet and give me a cocktail at the Ritz, because Charlotte never has one in her house?"

I declined firmly to play the role of "poppet" and crossed the room to talk to Agatha Rendle, who was looking neglected. She was an old friend, but one with whom it was becoming increasingly difficult to communicate; for while in the past she had always talked but little, and then in lisping epigrams, she now never talked at all, but expressed herself in long-armed gestures, reminiscent of those insects, who convey subtle thoughts to each other by means of their antennae. Our conversation was of necessity a monologue, and I had to judge by her expressive movements whether my efforts were meeting with success. Soon, however, the guests began to leave, and looking round the room I saw that only Ruby Halbury was there, with a young man unknown to me, who was obviously

going to be "poppet" enough to take her off elsewhere for a cocktail.

When we were finally left alone, Mrs. Ravine, who seemed rather tired, asked me if I could see her the next day, as she had some business which she wanted to discuss with me at length, and since it was growing late I left her, agreeing to have tea with her the following day.

Charlotte Ravine had given me, perhaps on purpose, no idea as to the cause of her worry, but the fact that she was evidently apprehensive about something coincided with Lady Inchell's remarks to me earlier in the afternoon. I turned over in my mind, as I walked away from the house, all the possible causes of the anxiety which was disturbing my old friend, but during the following twenty-four hours I had reached no satisfactory conclusion. It was true that she was seventy-five, but her health seemed impervious to age; financial difficulties could be ruled out; nor would any scandal or gossip greatly affect her, because she cared little for the opinion of the world and was more than capable of controlling any unpleasant incident that might have arisen.

The next day I went to tea with Mrs. Ravine, and found her alone in a small room, that had originally been her husband's study, and to which still clung an atmosphere of accounts and estate management. The choice of this unfamiliar room warned me at once that Charlotte was seriously worried, and she explained without any preamble the cause of her distress.

It appeared that the leases of all the houses in Oldbury Street, or at any rate on her side of it, had fallen in, with the result that the owners of the property had decided to pull down the houses, in order to build the usual many-windowed, barrack-workhouse blocks of flats, now becoming the pride of London. She had been approached by her landlords to see whether she would sell back to them the lease of her house, which did not expire for another ten years. With characteristic firmness she had refused to sell the lease, in spite of the prospect of a considerable profit, hoping by this refusal to hinder the alarming plan; but it was of no avail. Threats to her landlords, letters to the papers, had no effect; in fact every string had been pulled unsuccessfully to stop the demolition of this beautiful row of houses and to prevent the construction of buildings totally unsuitable to a small, quiet street; buildings which, resembling prisons or lunatic asylums, would thus be appropriate to the increasing number of people who find it essential to have restaurants, ice-rinks and swimming baths attached to their dwellings.

"After all," said Mrs. Ravine, "I am seventy"—I overlooked the innocuous subtraction of five years—"and another ten years would be quite enough. I've lived my life in this house, and here I intend to die. Why should they pester me from morning till night, simply because they want to ruin still another part of London?"

"But Charlotte, darling," I replied. "Surely they won't pull down the other houses until your lease is up?"

"Not at all, my dear, I know for a fact that they are starting to pull them down at once. And then think what the noise and dust will be like."

Unable to refute this statement, I decided that Mrs. Ravine must be persuaded to move. I urged her to do this, adding that there was absolutely no reason to suppose she would die within ten years, and that it was more comfortable to take a new house when she was seventy, than to wait until she was actually turned out. My arguments and entreaties had, however, no effect, and she only reiterated her former statement, "Here I have lived, and here I shall die."

It was obviously quite impossible at the moment to change Mrs. Ravine's point of view, and so I left her with a promise to return soon, and a plea that she would consider the idea of a new house. Later in the day I saw Lady Inchell, to whom I explained the situation, and the failure of my attempts at coercion.

"Darling Lottie," she said, "is as stubborn as a mule, so I suppose it's hopeless. I remember being somewhere near Luxor with her on camels and mine would not go on, and looked round all the time so nastily at my ankles that I fell off and waited for someone to help me; but Lottie simply quelled her equally spiteful camel by looking back at it—so I know exactly what you must have felt like."

Letting that pass, I tried to return to the object of our conversation. Lady Inchell was perfectly willing to help, but we failed to concoct any scheme for getting Charlotte to take a new house.

Alas, Mrs. Ravine's information was correct. A few days later, on turning the corner into Oldbury Street, I found that the work of destruction had been started, and nearly half of the first house had been reduced to a heap of rubble and broken bricks. Already the ungainly, clattering lorries were arriving to carry away the débris, and strips of coarse wood were being knocked together to form a stockade, doubtless designed to screen the hideous work.

I stopped to look at the ruins of the house. From the interior of the building streamers of paper floated sadly, revealing layers of long-forgotten, shabby wall-papers. It was possible to see in one glance the whole recent history of interior decoration, as through a rent in a modern Chinese, ultra-simple paper appeared a dull green, oak-leaf design of the 'nineties, itself only partially concealing a sombre, heavily-arabesqued remnant of the 'seventies; a paper which suggested vividly the days of grace before meals and family prayers after breakfast. But even more conspicuous than these tattered remains was an iron grate, which appeared to be clinging with metallic fingers to the wall of what must have been a small bed-room. There was something obscenely ludicrous about this poor grate. Doubtless in the discreet bedroom the grate would have pass unnoticed, as it warmed the toes of former generations, but now perched dangerously half way to heaven, it brought to my mind visions of ridiculous nudity.

Leaving hastily this dismal sight, lest I should see the grate fall from its steeple-jack position into the derelict dining-room, I went on to see Mrs. Ravine. She seemed determined to ignore the work in progress, and began at once to discuss a large dinner-party, which she was planning for the

following week. Our conversation was entirely superficial, and was concerned only with plans for entertaining her friends in the future ; nor on subsequent occasions did she refer more than casually to the continual encroachment of the housebreakers.

Nevertheless, in spite of the conspiracy of silence which was formed—for I felt myself pledged, as it were, not to speak of the destruction of Oldbury Street—the work went on swiftly, and every time that I saw Mrs. Ravine, the stealthy approach of the excavator and the whirring persistence of that machine, which so closely resembles a magnified dentist's drill, became more apparent. How long this continued I have forgotten, but it seemed at the time as if house after house was being laid low with the facility of a player as he knocks down nine-pins.

I had been asked to dine with Mrs. Ravine one night during the earlier part of the summer. It must obviously have been a long time after the beginning of the dilapidations in Oldbury Street, and I had been away from London for some weeks previously. Thus when I arrived, I saw at once how far the destroying devil had progressed. By now the whole row had been razed, and Mrs. Ravine's house was supported, on the side visible to me, by massive flying-buttresses of wood. Shored up by these " hearts of oak," it still retained something of the element of " stronghold " with which from my childhood's days it had always been associated.

Apart from subsequent happenings, I am convinced that in some way my senses had been sharpened, and thereby made more receptive—perhaps unconsciously—to the events of the evening.

Lloyd, my hostess's devoted parlour-maid, told me, on opening the door, that her mistress had not been very well recently, and had been suffering from insomnia. This was all the information I had time to obtain, between the opening of the front door and my entrance into the drawing-room ; but I think it added to the feeling of uneasiness with which I had already been imbued.

Lady Inchell was the only guest who had arrived before me, and it was obvious that she was determined to enjoy the evening, for as I was shown into the drawing-room, I heard her saying : " And if our husbands, Lottie darling, had heard that conversation, they would have turned in their narrow graves, poor things."

Before there was time to enquire what would have so disturbed the late Lord Inchell and Mr. Ravine, Agatha Rendell entered the room with antennae already outstretched, followed closely by George Stowe, Ruby Halbury and Daisy Mandeville. There was a little chorus of " Darling Lottie " ; " Oh, Ruby, how heavenly " ; " Daisy, my sweet treasure " ; interrupted again by the arrival of Jimmy Mandeville, Paul Loadforth, whom I recognized as being Ruby Halbury's latest conquest, and Sir Malcolm Steen.

Certainly it was going to be a successful dinner-party. Let alone the war-path behaviour of Lady Inchell, nearly everyone knew everybody else well enough to take trouble, and I could not help reflecting, that in spite of her

recent anxieties, Charlotte had not lost her unerring social sense.

When we had all settled ourselves in the dining-room, I looked round and saw that the room had undergone a great change. Instead of the carefully-hung and clearly-illuminated rows of pictures to which I was accustomed, the walls were now draped with loosely-clinging tapestries of no apparent value or merit. Charlotte noticed my glance of astonishment and said at once :

"My dear boy, I had to take down my pictures, because the vibration from all those cranes and pick-axes was so dreadful ; and I've hung up these drab tapestries from Norfolk to try and deaden the noise, and there's layers of felt behind them and curtains and things."

"Oh, Lottie," replied George Stowe on my behalf, "how marvellously you've arranged it. To think of all those exquisite Flemish creatures mouldering in Norfolk, and at last coming to a civilized place."

Ruby Halbury was attracting my attention on the other side by saying in an undertone :

"Don't you think Paul is quite the most heavenly creature in the world ? He can't stop rushing off to darkest Africa to kill lions and things ; and he has promised me skin after skin, till I shall be a perfect squaw—all skins and paint, you know—and perhaps we shall be able to afford a little wigwam in Wimbledon."

So far the evening was working out well. It seemed easy enough to carry on this kind of conversation by natural reflexes, and it was nice to have all Ruby's passing loves and aversions poured into my ear, while I was greedily eating the dish always associated in my mind with Mrs. Ravine. I had named it "Little Birds' Pie," since it consisted of a casserole made of every kind of small bird. Probably larks and sparrows were hidden therein, but so delicious was it that even if assured that it was made entirely of nightingales, I should have invented some excuse with which to salve my conscience. I was already occupied with a large plateful of asparagus, before echoes of an altercation from further down the table reached me.

"She's so mousy," Mrs. Mandeville was saying.

"No, dear—rather I should say blowsy," retorted Sir Malcolm, and to my great surprise, Agatha Rendle, with a twist of her antennae, lisped, "So utterly lousy."

Before I could determine who had been the subject of this fascinating discussion, Jimmy Mandeville had begun to condole with Mrs. Ravine on the destruction of the other houses in Oldbury Street. It seemed to me a tactless theme to have chosen, but I had forgotten that actually the only two people who knew about the question were Lady Inchell and myself. It was easy to see that the subject was unpleasant to our hostess, and equally easy for me to cut short any further reference to it by talking to Lady Inchell across the table about fortune-tellers ; which topic never failed to bring forth all the details of her latest charlatan.

"Two new ones, my dear," was her immediate response to this bait.

"One of them is such a wonderful woman. She told me that poor Teddy" (the late Lord Inchell) "was happy; that I ought never to start a journey on a Friday, or sleep between damp sheets, or put white flowers in the house; that I must always wear emeralds during the summer and be a religious woman; also to purge myself regularly and never wear anything but flannel next the skin."

"Flannel, Katie dearest, how original!" cried Mrs. Mandeville, "But surely you'll never be able to get your lovely frocks on over *flannel*?"

"Yes, Daisy," replied Lady Inchell, "I shall soon have to *squeeze* myself into my frocks, just like you."

Our hostess intervened at this moment of incipient hostility by saying: "You ought to follow my example, and be as comfortable as you can on every possible occasion."

She seemed, in fact, to be most comfortable in a loose, black velvet tea-gown, which accentuated more than ever her parchment face. Seldom, I thought, had she looked more vital and more ageless. The fifty odd years of active life had apparently charged her with electric power, which could renew itself indefinitely. This activity was referred to by some people as restlessness; but surely to be restless at the age of seventy-five is a sign of great activity.

Before we left the dining-room, my eyes wandered again towards the background of tapestry. The woven, puppet figures were very unreal, and the tapestry itself seemed to move slightly, as if we were sitting in a tent disguised by hangings, sensitive to the stirrings of a breeze.

The rest of the evening was spent agreeably in making plans for a party, to be given by Lady Inchell for her new fortune-tellers. Many suggestions were put forward, and Mrs. Mandeville interrupted all in turn with her little, pointed barbs of wit: but, apart from that, everything went with exceptional smoothness.

Although it was growing late by the time I left, the rather sultry heat made me decide to walk home slowly. On turning the corner out of Oldbury Street, I looked back and could just distinguish the outlines of the last remaining house, propped up by their stalwart, oak bulwarks.

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During the early hours of the morning there was a heavy storm of rain accompanied by a gale of wind. I was woken up by rain hammering with staccato monotony on my windows. The room seemed to be full of those mysterious shapes, which appear, even in the most familiar surroundings, during the small hours of the day. I thought, too, that I heard some kind of sharp cry, although it was not repeated: yet it inclined me to listen for a possible repetition, and I slept badly and woke earlier than usual. The rain had stopped; but I was so hopelessly wide awake that I got up and rang for breakfast.

My meal was interrupted by the ringing of the telephone bell. An agitated voice was speaking. "Darling, it's Katie Inchell. The most

terrible thing has happened : no, not on the telephone, I can't tell you. Come round, can you ? It's only two minutes—at once. Yes, yes, please."

I hurried down the street and across the square to Lady Inchell's house and found her still in bed and sobbing.

" Oh, it's too dreadful," she gasped, " the house has collapsed, and, oh, I can't tell you. The foreman has just been here, yes : and they found poor darling Lottie dead, and her body so terribly crushed. You see the storm washed the ground away, and the foundations sank. Everything fell apart and the house collapsed at once. Oh, those devils, they've killed poor Lottie with their cursed new buildings! What a fearful prophecy she made to you, when she said : ' Here I have lived, and here I shall die.' "



ABBAYE DE PONTIGNY

Woodcut by G. RAVERAT

LIFE AND DEATH OF THE PRINCESS GERTRUDE

By NUGENT BARKER

AT Beeding village in Sussex, you will find a half-timbered house, or large cottage, with bay windows ; and fifteen years ago the owner told me its secret while we sat in the parlour there. A writing-table stood between us ; on it he had laid his thick spectacles ; at his back was a shelf with all his published books. We were in the middle of summer. The street and the hawthorn hedges were white with dust. Across the fields a church spire twinkled in a grove of elms. Fifteen years is a long time, and my friend is now dead. What else could I expect ? Even at that remote period he was an old man looking into the past.

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Near sixty years ago, he said, I built a castle in my mind's eye, filled it with great halls, lofty kitchens, intricate corridors, and tapestried mural chambers ; threaded it with spiral stairs, and threw up bastions at strategic corners ; pierced its walls with lancet windows, and postern gates from which rope ladders hung down into the ditch below.

Heavenward, it showed me the familiar silhouette of turrets and battlements—often against an amber, evening sky. I could see everything ; I had it complete. Even to the curve and colour of the first bend of steep roadway, cut through the solid rock, that could be seen dropping out of sight whenever I peered down from a certain high-set window in the castle walls. Even to particular pictures, wood-carvings, pieces of ordnance, a lute lying idle in one of the galleries. It was to be, I thought, the *mise-en-scène* of some story that I intended to write, a story with which my youthful pen was to conquer the world. Also it was to be situated above one of those black, foreboding escarpments on which the eye opens leisurely when the river-boat has just turned some legendary corner of the Rhine. For this reason, I was soon in great difficulties concerning my ditch : I fancied that its presence in the picture was a little incongruous : then, looking about me, I discovered that it was no more than a natural groove, or channel, in the rocky and lichened heights behind the castle ; and sometimes I would throw a bridge across it to where the road began. You will laugh when I tell you that this picture came to me on the top of the Peckham 'bus. And at that moment our own Thames was nowhere in sight. We were clattering gaily by Camberwell Green ; children were calling ; and the driver was flicking his whip on the horses' backs.

But I clung to my romantic vision. It was too good to be thrown away, too clearly planned and too firmly substantiated within my mind ; " one day," I said, " this castle must be soaring in pages of print." And in order that it might possess the first ingredient of a human story, I installed, as

chatelaine of its halls and treasures, a fair-haired German girl. I think her name jumped to my mind in a moment, the Princess Gertrude von Arnholdt-Geyerstein. She was very young when I created her, a mere slip of a girl, as we say ; a husband, whom she had never known, lay in the big cemetery at Dusseldorf, one year dead ; and soon, no doubt, the mind of the forlorn widow began to turn to more important questions than the probable appearance of the sculptured angels, garlanded flowers, and verses on her husband's tomb—I mean, of course, to the question of her *raison d'être*, of her immediate, enigmatical future. . . .

All day she must have been asking herself : “ Why am I here ? Why has he made me ? What does he want me to do ? ” And I had no projects for her. Poor Princess ! How pitifully her life had begun ! For what purpose had I put her there, in that castle where the shouts of the builders had scarcely faded from turret and battlement ; where the sound of the hammer and the saw and the chisel was but recently the scratching of my pen upon the writing-paper ? Did I wish her to sit patiently, in a richly carved chair, until something happened—to listen, until suddenly she might be permitted to hear the voice of somebody calling—calling over the water—to find her way into the kitchens—or to climb to the remoteness of a turret chamber, where shafts of sunlight sloped through narrow windows, and filled her with a greater longing for the forbidden country beyond ?

I have, in fact, not the slightest doubt that she did these things : and that, having accomplished them, she felt no happier than before : and I fancy that her only consolation was to be found in those moments when, at the close of some particularly irksome morning or afternoon, or in the red of evening, the Princess Gertrude von Arnholdt-Geyerstein jumped up from the chair or embroidered couch in which she had been so foolishly waiting, urged by the sudden thought that it did not matter what her actions might be—that her animated existence was the sole object of her creation—that nothing concerned her save the all-important fact that she could *move*. She could move, and in no uncertain manner. For she had legs, and they were young. Whereupon, I do believe that she used to dance in front of the mirrors, or form plans to hold some kind of gymkhana for herself in the larger rooms and corridors of the castle. But, of course, she would have to go warily, lest somebody for whose appearance she was not ready should surprise her at the corners of staircases, or when she jumped or ran or danced in the high-roofed banqueting hall (I had often an impression that the castle resembled in many particulars a baronial mansion of Tudor times)—should leave her standing with open mouth, whence no words could come because I had not taught her the words that she must say. And I had nothing, nothing whatever for her to do.

The road—it was more correctly a precipitous path—never showed her the shape of a human figure, or rang with the sound of a footfall, on the one short length of it that was visible to her when she peered down almost daily from an upper window. Did she open one of the postern gates, there was nothing but the rope ladder dropping idly beneath her, with its taut rungs

never trodden by human feet, and the ditch below sweeping in a slow curve to the right and to the left, where a garrison of men could have been gathered for a sortie under cover of the further ramparts, but wherein now there were nothing but massive forms of light and shadow marching to the baton of the sun ; where, sometimes, according to my mood, in imagination I could see the dry bottom of the ditch, and sometimes motionless, twinkling water that made it unnecessary for me to look up into the cloud-puffed depths of the sky. She lived on, peeping out of the windows, wistful-eyed, nourished only by my own conscience, by the same energy that had created her and the vast building in which she lived ; and there she lay, upon my desk, she and her castle, awaiting the time when I might have need of her, and could send her adventuring into the world.

And the pity of it was that for many years the poor girl had nothing to do. . . . I hope you don't think me very whimsical ? These whimsical ideas of mine. . . . Why, from the very beginning, I was intensely practical ! Was it not for purely practical reasons that I had created her ? Afterwards, as you know, through the tremendous sale of the "von Geyerstein" books, it was she who created me. But at first I was very dilatory. I had schemes for her, oh yes, drafted them roughly into note-books, on the backs of letters, on any odd scrap of paper, you know how one works ; then I tore them up : and how many times used I to wake in the night, with my thoughts turning at once in her direction, to visualise her as sleeping now in this room of the castle, now in that, or possibly walking some narrow corridor that I had planned to the minutest detail—that corridor, for instance, which led to the oriel window (the only one of its kind in the place) overlooking the distant town of Mainz (then shining brightly beneath the moon) through which she was about to gaze in an endeavour to drive away the troubles that had wakened her from her sleep ? Naturally, I had good reasons for my dilatoriness. My own life—my literary life—was in the making, and I had to go carefully before I leapt ; and there were other stories to be started and finished, and there was plenty of time. Also I drew a certain confidence from the fact that the Princess Gertrude was young and exceedingly lusty : her face, her neck, her arms rippled with as much glow and vigour as my mind was able to shower upon them, and very often her hair would be caught by the sweet wind that came blowing up from the vineyards ; vineyards that sloped back to a great distance on the other side of the river, so that from the top of the castle she never tired of gazing upon the rocky terraces, wishing that she could walk among them.

When, at last, I hit upon a story for her, she was already getting on in years. That is to say, she was no longer a young girl. You see how conscientiously, and how consistently, I was planning the whole work ? Her life—her body—was to age naturally, in an actual manner, from that moment when I had brought her into being. The Princess Gertrude von Arnholdt-Geyerstein. A woman in the prime of her life. With the calendar lying on the desk before me—it was June, I remember . . . and the year ? . . .

hm, hm . . . eighteen-seventy-five—I looked over my study, deep in thought. At that time, I was living in one of the poorer parts of Kensington. There was a ruler at my elbow, and I took it up, beating it lightly into my flattened palm. She would have grown, perhaps, a trifle thinner; for I believed her constitution to be of that kind which knits the muscles, pulling the frame together; and she was always rather bigly-boned. Yes, decidedly a potential heroine for the series of stories that I had in contemplation—stories of a somewhat fast and sensational kind. Call me, if you like, almost the first of the modern sensationalists. What a splendid adventuress the woman would make! And I began—quaintly enough, I suppose—to contract her name to the diminutive “Trude.” I liked the sound of that final “e”, with its tiny upward turn. I could see that it might carry her far in her enterprises. It could answer no purpose if I were to tell you her first story, which I began to write with great vehemence there and then. I started the long series quite ambitiously, with political intrigue, and much familiarity of conduct in Berlin society.

My first sign to Trude that I needed her was a man’s voice hailing from the roadway. She looked up quickly over the latest piece of that growing collection of embroideries with which she had been occupying a great part of these early, ineffectual years; her hands fluttered to her heart, and slowly, very slowly, the blood ebbed from her face; she walked to the window, and saw beneath her the figure of a man in a cut-away coat and riding-breeches, sitting a white horse. The man and the horse were extraordinarily motionless—there was a kind of expectancy in the two figures—the horse’s head was as rigid as the figurehead of a docked ship, and the man was staring up at Trude’s window with his fixed, scrutinous gaze. Then she ran out to speak with him. Whilst he stooped from the saddle, they had a long, low conference together; presently she ran back into her castle, the man and his horse pattered away, and throughout the evening there was a sound of boxes in her bedroom, the heavy, leather boxes of the period, a sound of cupboards being emptied and of the boxes being filled, of excursions of her hurrying feet along the stone corridors, to some distant quarter of the castle and back again. She slept ill that night—I was aware of her excitement—of the number of times she turned her pillow—of the smiling into the darkness. When I awoke in the morning her room was empty, she was gone, the Princess Gertrude von Arnholdt-Geyerstein had become a rising factor in Middle Europe.

2

And for a week, a month, I, who had created her, found the greatest difficulty in recognizing this new-fledged, vivacious Trude who threw her eyes about like a play-actress, sold secrets, set the women against her, snapped her fingers, and tilted her chin. . . .

Well. It is a strange, contradictory power, and you cannot deny it; I mean the power by which sometimes authors are held in the hollow of their characters’ hands. Did she steal a document from the Count’s bureau, then *my* finger, too, would be at my lips, and my eyes peeping watchfully

over my shoulder. The things she did ! As bold as brass ! And very often these early stories would be centred on amours of a piquant though not very terrible kind.

But in those Victorian days I was scarcely surprised to discover that one or two of the English papers were writing articles on the pernicious trend of the new fiction. What ! Trude—Trude and I—took no notice of that ; on the contrary, she persisted more flagrantly than ever in her gallivanting. Also she extended the scene of her political activities, running down to the island of Caprera, and there holding long interviews with Garibaldi, at that time an old man of nearly seventy (and an old bachelor, too, seeing that he was no longer united to the Countess Raimondi) ; it was thought that he might be game enough yet for an occasional crack against the Germans. As he listened to her rather gabbling, earnest account of things possible, I fancy his fingers would tap, and his eyes twinkle through the villa windows to La Maddalena, or to white sails slanting over the sea. Also one summer she took a big “palace” on the Rio della Paglia at Venice, became the heroine of a dozen of my shorter, more picturesque stories—“Gondolaria,” I called them—and for two years never saw her castle on the western bank of the Rhine. When she returned home, the Princess Gertrude von Arnholdt-Geyerstein found awaiting her, in one of the many ante-rooms that I had built for private conversations, a stunted, squarish woman with thick arms and a heavy nose—a black dress shaking with sequins—a voice raised imperiously over some ridiculous wrong—and this was the opening scene of perhaps the most successful of the earlier Geyerstein tales. By that time, I had published half a dozen books of short and long stories, my reputation—better call it my popularity—was growing by leaps and bounds, Pawson and Wainwright wanted as much of Gertrude as I could give them. You can see those volumes in the book-case behind me—the books that you say you have never read—“*Adventures Of The Princess Gertrude*,” “*Arnholdt Castle*,” “*Further Adventures Of The Princess Gertrude*,” “*Gondolaria*,” “*Queen Of The Rhine*,” “*A Princess Interferes*.” . . . Trash. All trash. . . . Yet they had their day. Most of my stories at that period were published by Messrs. Pawson and Wainwright, from their early premises in Essex Street ; Andrew Wainwright is still living, you know, and often he and I talk over those old tales and times.

Trude ! What a time you had ! Yes, what a time she had, coming and going, swaying empires, breaking men’s hearts, and sometimes being left in the lurch ; the perfect adventuress ! One autumn—you can turn back to this in the old papers—Sir William Harcourt, the Home Secretary of those days, caused a warrant to be applied for, with Pawson and Wainwright and the Elephant Press as defendants. The charge was not unexpected, either by them or by me : a charge of libel against some Prince of the Austro-Hungarian Court ; the magistrate stroked his chin ; and the book was withdrawn before any disastrous damage had been done. That book, with the others, stands on the shelf behind me ; it became the turning-point of my career. In the spring of eighteen eighty-four, I took a house in Swan

Walk, Chelsea, where I looked through the beautiful iron gateway of the Physic Gardens. There my imagination found a new impetus in the shrubs and plants that held a million grains of apothecary's poison in their innocent hearts. This was the beginning of my brightest period. And it went on for years. But one day the Princess Gertrude returned to her castle, arms hanging, with nothing whatever to do.

For there was an interval of a whole year during which my invention failed me, I wrote no books, I was travelling in South America for the sake of the experience, and with deep sympathy for her I set about composing new pastimes for my poor Trude—games of Patience played with tiny packs of beautifully pictured cards—songs that she learnt and sang to the accompaniment of a lute in the twilight—a new dress, at which she was to work for who knows how long . . . until I should call her again, and she could dazzle me with its brightness. . . .

It was during this period, too, that Trude, having returned with knowledge of the world, discovered the dungeons. The world, here, was indeed but a sprinkling of light upon the floor; the walls were a-glimmer with snow-white fungus; and in this place she would spend hours at a time, round-eyed, looking at the instruments of torture, and conjuring up the screams of the past. And from the dungeons, she would hurry away at last to the spiced air, the silken altar, the statued niches, and carved corbels of the tiny, six-sided chapel at the top of the keep.

When I returned to Chelsea, she took quite frankly to petty but spectacular crime.

It was a short, bright series, loudly coloured, yet it did not fit as naughtily as it should have done into the 'nineties. For these, now, were the 'nineties, when Wilde and Beardsley and the Yellow Book were powers in the land; powers, too, in a softer, more domestic mood, were Holmes and Watson, and Martin Hewitt, and the *Stories From The Diary of A Doctor*, and because of these persons, soon my poor Trude began to wear very thin; she tottered, and must receive stimulants to pull her together. I could not find them. The old tricks were useless now. Who wanted the old tricks? The thefts, the stratagems, the love-makings and the peccadillos? Yet what else could she do? Trude and I were unable to think of anything else. I still wrote my stories; published them; it was expected of me; they were not really wanted. Then one day I heard the critics saying that it was time I killed Trude.

"Killed Trude?"

"Yes."

Trude. . . . Oh! . . . Why that? But I knew that they were right. Kill Trude. That's it. Kill her dead. Kill her off. Bury her deep. Had it come to that? My wonderful Trude. . . . I must shut up shop. I must write my last Geyerstein tale.

So I took a cottage—this cottage—in the village of Beeding. I dare say you saw quite a lot of the village as you came up the road. It is very small. The Adur runs near, to the west; on warm evenings I walk as far as the

river banks, and there, in miniature, I build a fanciful representation of Gertrude von Arnholdt-Geyerstein's castle. Sometimes I have an inspiration—a new story jumps into my mind—but it is of no use, now. How she would have liked it ! How well she would have played it ! No one better. What a pair, she and I !

I had come to this place for the purpose of cutting myself adrift from the old associations. Nothing would have distressed me more, than to slay Trude amid the familiar signs of success in my Chelsea home : then, to look up, and, out of my window, to see the quiet plants in the Physic Gardens. Yet even here it was not easy—at first it was impossible—to endue myself with a murderous mind. The place was like a painted picture ; and look at that glimpse of the sunny street ! Through the whole of one spring I dallied in this very room ; moreover, I began to write another of my Venetian tales, in which not a vestige of harm was to come to my dear Trude.

Near the end of this story, I was possessed by a powerful longing for the dear lady's decease.

" If I don't kill her now," I argued, " Trude will go on living long after I am dead." And the thought of her death, with no one sitting beside her, in the years to come, on the canopied bed with its pillars of fine Riemen-schneider wood-carving, while the sun, or the moon, or the stars, shone, or beamed, or twinkled, into the lancet windows of the castle, filled me with the acutest dismay. At about this time, do you remember, Conan Doyle slew Sherlock Holmes at the hands of Moriarty ; and when I heard of this event, I nodded my head, telling myself that all was settled now between Trude and me ; that Trude must die of the fever in Lithuania ; or drown in the waters of the swift Rhone ; or fall with a bullet through her heart in a box at the Milan Opera House ; or drop with a dagger between her ribs, at the mouth of an alley in Barcelona. It was then, of course, that I made my great discovery . . . the discovery that I loved her better than anything else on earth.

And my love was not due to the solitary fact that through her I had been able to hold my head very high above water for upwards of forty years. It was due also to a colossal pride. Pride that I had created her, that the whole wild series of Geyerstein tales was utterly and triumphantly mine. The blending of these two passions decided me finally on one part, at least, of the course that ought to be taken. How could I allow my dear Trude to die in Germany, with leagues of ocean between us ? Better far that she should rest in my own country, where she had never been. And I cannot tell you all the cunning ways by which, in this final adventure of the Princess Gertrude von Arnholdt-Geyerstein, I sought to ease the burdens of her journey to England—taking upon myself the duties of some spiritual tourist-agent, noting that the boat then sailing from the Hook of Holland was a good ship, well appointed, with the littlest capacity for rolling, and a cabin amply suited to the Princess's high-born constitution ; urging my imagination to surround her with sweet faces and pleasant voices on the

Harwich quay, and in the London train to ply her with a luncheon-basket from the depths of which I swear that I could catch the aroma of hot coffee, *foie-gras* sandwiches, and currant buns. In the whirl of London I lost her for a moment—found her—lost her again . . . then caught a glimpse of her back as she entered the Sussex train. At my elbow, the pot of untouched tea was nearly cold, the pages of my manuscript were piling in front of me, and presently I began to ask myself at what time she should arrive ? At about this time ? I looked at the clock : the hands were pointing to a quarter to seven. On an evening like this ? I looked at the window : and the beautiful evening was already turning red. At that moment I saw a group of shadows moving grotesquely on the flat of the village street . . . the persons to whom they belonged were hidden from me by the intervening abutment of my cottage wall . . . but in the quiet air I could hear voices, and I could hear, too, something that one of the voices said. . . .

“Dat liddle white house yarnder, leddy.”

In such a manner she came to me, with a gentle knock that sent a flutter through the hall.

3

You may be certain that I was very curious to see this Trude ; and I did not doubt that she was equally inquisitive to set eyes on me. I hurried to the door, and stood aside when she entered, so that the first thing that I saw of her was the side of her bonneted head. There was a finger of grey hair tapping her cheek ; and especially it was her nose that told me I had not lived in vain. It was most beautifully modelled, a clear-cut and delicate thing, being neither too pushful nor too lazy ; but her walk, alas, was full of weariness, she stooped a little at the shoulders, and I noticed that her lips and ears were faintly tinged with blue.

She was now turning towards me, with an ease and confidence that pleased me the more because I knew that she, too, was as nervous as a school-child.

“ Oh ! Won’t you give me your hand ? ”

That, in fact, is what I wanted to say (wondering, at the same time, whether she would be confused by the English fashion) ; but this strange blending of shyness and composure frustrated any immediate attempt at conversation, hurrying us through the hall, and bringing us to a rather tensive standstill in my writing-room. Here the declining sun was twinkling on the tea-pot ; the globular surface of the latter showed me the walls and window extended almost to bursting-point, and after gazing at the fiery picture for an unconscionable period, “ Shall I,” I murmured, turning to the Princess, “ ask Maggie to make fresh tea ? ”

She listened attentively to my voice, which she heard now for the first time. Ach, zo. Ach, zo. And once or twice her head nodded. Presently her cheeks flushed, and she answered my question in a low, guttural English that enchanted me with its wrong words and Germanesque phrases. “ Wonn-der-ful,” I heard her saying, “ to have tea at you.”

She showed, too, now that the ice was broken, and she and I were

standing on the footing of almost old friends, a woman's lively interest in my room : her eyes, travelling over the four corners, soon found the sheets of my uncompleted manuscript : she walked towards them, her shadow fell upon the scattered papers, and so did her hand, in light, caressing touches that reminded me of persons reading from Braille.

"Dear stories. . . . But what, now," she added, turning over the leaves, until she came to that unfinished paragraph in which her own presence had taken up the narrative, and I had put down my pen, "shall you do by me?"

We laughed ; it was not my intention, I told her, to send her out adventuring until she had refreshed herself with hot tea and toast, and was properly rested ; Maggie coming in at that moment, I desired the girl to prepare these delicacies as quickly as she was able. "Maggie doesn't take after her mother," I said to the Princess, nodding across the street ; "the girl's a great dawdler." Thereafter we talked of indifferent things until the tea came, and the Princess's bonneted head was bending above the tray.

While she sat there, sipping her tea, and presiding over the tea-table, I took stock of her. A tall woman, rather bigly made, and by now so sadly gaunt. Yet always with an adorable mixture of waywardness and tractability playing through the strong hands, from which I gathered that at heart the Princess Gertrude von Arnholdt-Geyerstein was entirely beautiful. She had believed in her world of wickedness no more than I. We had cut our capers, we had put our tongues in our cheeks. And now that it was all over, and the first inquisitivenesses of our meeting were ended, and she was sipping her "English tea," I noticed again the blueness of her lips and ears, and decided that perhaps she had become vaguely "asthmatical." At any rate, the slight oppression of her breathing caused a certain monotony to fill the room, and while she looked down at her plate, with faintly humped shoulders, I began to amuse myself with a mental abridgment of her life history. And what a history ! I ran over some of her escapades. I wondered which of them had diverted her, or saddened her, most. Perhaps she guessed something of my thoughts, for suddenly she looked up, smiling, and saying : "Yes?"

"A little more tea?" I murmured. "You must."

She nodded her head.

"Was it the adventure with Count Karlbach, or the theft of Señora Lucilla's jewels?"

"Ach, Gott ! Ach, Gott !" Such a pretty laugh ! I could have kissed her, but did not dare. Instead, I postponed the potato soup, the roasted fowl, and the cheese savoury—dishes that would have clashed too heavily with her tea—and on my return from the kitchen, began to pass the time in questioning the Princess closely on the hundred and one ramifications of the castle—the *exact* shape of its rooms—was it true that there existed a second version of Hans Holbein's Solothurn Madonna in one of the bed-chambers?—could she see both Köln and Mainz from the oriel window?—or whither led that winding corridor that I had seen so often, through the

low archway near the foot of the keep ? For long she continued to enlighten me upon these subjects ; but eventually her answers became so hazy, and lazy, and far between ; then there were such awkward silences ; that at last I was scarcely surprised to hear a snore starting from the Princess's chair.

" Dear God ! " I muttered. " Why, she is an old woman, worn out ! " Whereupon I hurried to the door, and called to Maggie that she was to prepare the sunny bedroom over the porch. But my voice awakened the Princess, who set up a sharp fit of coughing, and held a tiny unstoppered bottle beneath her nose.

" Hch ! Hch ! I cuff—I cow—How is it," she asked me, " when I make so ? "

" You *cough*, Trude," I answered, calling her by that name for the first time.

" I *cough*. Oh, your wonn-der-ful English language ! "

I was now very concerned about my dear Trude, and insisted that she was to run off to bed without the loss of a moment. This she did, ascending the stairs with the childish curiosity that had attended all her past adventures, and leaving me alone with my manuscript, in which I began to write up the dialogue that I had just spoken and heard. But alas ! a terrible catastrophe befell my little household ; for in the morning a fever set its icy hand upon me, took away my appetite, quickened my pulse, and in a hundred wretched ways caused me to fall as ill as an old wife's medicine-chest.

And because of the new interest that had entered my life, at first I would not listen to reason, but sat on the edge of my bed, goggling at Maggie, and imagining my darling Trude seated already at the breakfast-table, with a fork in her hand, and her mouth full of bacon. But the thought of the bacon was too much for me. In a short while I was back again beneath the bed-clothes, and Maggie was running up the street for Dr. Barnet, that tubby little man.

The sight of my old friend cheered my heart. He wore his riding-breeches, and there was a dianthus in his button-hole, a lovely flower, which the rest of us would have called a pink.

Hm, ha. While he looked down my throat, and pressed his fat fingers to my pulse, I tried to catch sight or sound of Trude, and commanded Maggie and the doctor that on no account was she to come into the room.

Vainly I cried to them : " Don't let her in ! " She ran into the room ; she was about to throw her arms around me ; with the utmost difficulty she was hustled away. My throat tore me to pieces. There was a spinning-wheel in my head. And although, indeed, for two days I did not see her again—as soon as the nature of my illness had declared itself, there stood she : and I have now, after these many years, an impression of nothing but Trude, Trude, Trude, hovering at my bedside, or sitting in some chair by the open window ; dosing me with spirit of mindererus for my fever, or with ipecacuanha, and never ceasing to indulge my thirst with diluent drinks

and iced water ; dieting me with warm gruels thinned with milk ; and easing my throat with solutions of chlorate of potash. She physicked me, too, with blue pill and colocynth ; and at the beginning of my convalescence, would feed me with eggs and milk-puddings, and later with whiting, turbot, and other forms of the flakier fishes, and a veal broth that had been a great favourite of hers, one year, in southern Germany. Grudgingly I told her that it was madness for her to be doing these things : that Maggie's mother should have performed them, seeing that she was the village midwife, and therefore in every way a most competent person ; her Highness answered, that Dr. Barnet allowed it because my case, from the very outset, had shown signs of progressing in a normal and highly satisfactory manner ; also because she herself had been a sufferer, and was now immune, from the same fever.

" When was that, Trude ? " I wondered, looking towards a bookshelf, on which were a few of my own novels, bound in tooled cloth of fading colours ; " something that you did without my knowledge ? " She tried to tell me in her pretty English, fell surprisingly into vast difficulties, pulled from a pocket a dictionary of minute proportions ; smiled, I thought, a little forlornly . . . and after a time, I did not see her in my room again. . . .

4

She was gone ; or had it been, perhaps, a trick of my departed fever, and Trude had never come into this cottage at all ? Although I knew that it was foolish of me to encourage the wretched superstition, yet I hunted the room for signs of her existence, seeking to persuade myself that it would be impossible to find traces of Trude's fingers on bottles and glasses ; that it was Maggie's mother who had attended me through my illness, pouring out my medicines, and sitting at the open window until her head nodded ; I peered into the village, and there, even now, was Mrs. Sparshot, bustling along her garden path, a tiny figure, her apron flying in the wind as she came up the street. On that day, I remember, I was sitting in a chair for the first time ; the weather was brightly boisterous, a young fire, made from sweet-smelling logs, smoked in the grate ; and I could hear Dr. Barnet, on his arrival, wailing loudly to Maggie and her mother, somewhere in the lower parts of the house. " Oh, Maggie, Maggie ! " I heard him crying ; " Oh, Mrs. Sparshot ! " and he was such a long time coming up to my room—then I heard him humming and hawing on the landing below mine—that at last I could contain myself no longer : but, running out, and calling over the banisters, demanded that I should be given the truth without further delay.

And it would be impossible for me to tell you the nervous manner in which, clapping his hands a little more briskly than usual, and utterly incapable of throwing off the frowns and jerky intonations and movements that he had brought into my room, Dr. Barnet during the next ten days tried to persuade me that Mrs. Arnold was merely resting.

" Promise that you will let me see her . . . promise that you will let me

see her. . . .” I kept on repeating, while the doctor gazed at me blankly, his right hand pulling down the back of his coat.

“Well,” he would snap, turning suddenly on his heel, and leaving me always to conjecture that he had given his word ; alas—before I knew where I was, I had contracted an earache, which required that I should have olive oil and laudanum poured everlastingly into the painful cavity ; my head was swathed in a bandage from ear to ear ; my temperature, too, had strange bouts of rising and falling, and I returned to my bed, where for a long time I lay very deaf to the world. And in addition to these doleful complications, at the end of a fortnight my tubby doctor’s face had fallen as long as a graveyard, and to my daily enquiries the little man began to reply very evasively ; staring out of the window, he hoped to put aside my questions by commenting on sounds and movements that he heard and saw in the street below, so that in the midst of such a vast amount of mental and bodily affliction my only consolation was this : that Trude and I were in a like case, lying on our beds of sickness, with but my floor and her ceiling between us.

The room of the Princess Gertrude was a tiny, square domain of chintz ; chintz chairs, chintz dressing-table, a short chintz sofa ; there was a sturdy beam across the ceiling, a glass-panelled cupboard built into the thick wall, while a pleasant colour was cast by a bed-side lamp suitably shaded, or in the day-time by the sunlight filtering through rose curtains ; and the window looked over the porch, so that the lazy crunch and voices of the Beeding villagers, early astir, would come up in the morning, and mingle with the waning voices of sleep.

And here she died. An impulse, that I do not pretend to explain, awakened me, and leaving my bed I peeped at the windy weather soon after dawn. The sun was already half hidden in vapours, and I saw, in the middle sky, dark clouds running and massing, ultimately to appear in the shape of a huge castle, turreted, and perched on a rock. Flush with my eyes spread the roofs of the village of Beeding ; the shingle spire of the church rose palely from the depths of one of the many clumps of swaying trees ; and below me, on the village street beneath my window, I fancied that I could see the figure of a man in a cut-away coat and riding-breeches, sitting a white horse. The man and the horse were extraordinarily motionless—there was a kind of expectancy in the two figures—the horse’s head was as rigid as the figure-head of a docked ship, and the man—so it seemed to me—was staring up at Trude’s window with a fixed, scrutinous gaze. Presently he rode away, and no doubt it was but Farmer Kempster off to the fields ; yet the incident was enough to fill me with sad convictions, and it has been always a matter of great sorrow with me that I was unable to hold her hand when Trude died.

One day they came in to shut the window, but I forbade them to do such a thing, and in a few minutes I heard the bell tolling. I heard it when the pain in my head was too mighty for thought, or anger, or sorrow, I took it with me into my dreams, I heard it tolling in every corner of the cottage

when I went down at last, on the morning of a tremulous autumnal day. On one of the landings I met Maggie ; she stood to let me pass, holding a cotton duster in her hand.

" Oh, Maggie, Maggie ! And did she have all the same medicines that I had ? "

" She had um all ! "

" The spirit of mindererus, and the ipecacuanha ? The chlorate of potash, the blue pill and the colocynth ? "

" Same as you had um ! . . . "

" Same as I had um ? . . . "

I remember that Dr. Barnet called, and I asked him to stay to lunch, which he did, eating voraciously several cuts off the cold joint, and holding his Médoc to the light. Afterwards we went into the garden at the back of the cottage, sat on two chairs, and spoke about the hollyhocks, and the Michaelmas daisies. There was a humming of insects ; it was hotter now than summer had been. The little man wore an Evening Primrose, or *Oenothera*, in his button-hole ; presently I asked him to tell me as minutely as possible the illness from which she had died.

She had died of a dropsy, said the doctor, arising out of an attack of scarlet fever contracted while nursing : an anasarca, or, in other words, of an effusion into the pericardium, or sac surrounding the heart.

" Yes, doctor," I muttered.

Which organ, he added, was already greatly debilitated by chronic pericarditis, due, no doubt, to an active life that eventually had become too strenuous for her constitutional powers, and to an insidious and highly troublesome emphysema.

" Yes, doctor," I said.

The little man turned quickly to me. " You noticed her lips and ears, how blue they were ? And her humped shoulders, and her loud breathing ? Yet she must have been a healthy woman in her time, your sister ? What is it I have heard—that she lived all her life in some foreign country—"

" In Germany . . . in one of those old castles on the Rhine . . . "

" She ought never to have travelled so far ! " he muttered almost angrily, on a rising intonation, and jumping to his feet.

" No, doctor," I answered.

He shook me by the hand.

" A whisky and soda before you go ? "

5

And now she lies here. I am always thinking of that. There is plenty of time, plenty of time. For all my days without her are inexpressibly long and languid, and I feel that I shall never die mortally, as Trude died. At dusk I go about the village, and talk to the villagers, but they are all so lifeless, such puppets, such stick-in-the-muds ! with their crooked fingers going up to their hats, and all of them cut to one slow pattern. Trude ! I think of you then ! Yet I am glad that you are not living now, for I see certain war-clouds on the horizon, and you and I would have been separated by reason

of our nationalities. Maggie has told me that after death her hands were still warm. Well. The strangest of all her stories was this—the story that I am telling you now. And I never finished writing it—those of her public who remember her, why, they must think her still living ! I have often wondered whether Beeding folk ever knew that once, for five whole weeks, they had a princess in their midst. There was an honour that would have set them by the ears !

I believe this : I believe you are wondering if it has ever occurred to me to go to Germany, on a voyage of exploration, to seek those turrets and battlements that had come to me so *very* clearly on the top of the Peckham bus. How foolish you are ! Why, if I were to ask travellers from Köln to Mainz questions about her castle in Germany, probably they would think deeply, click their heels, and for the sake of politeness towards me add that no doubt, yes, in addition to Stolzenfels, Drachenfels, Rheinfels, and others of a demonstrable nature, there may be some part of that portion of the Rhine banks looking exactly like a castle, at sunset, formed in the dark cliffs. No. No. I am contented to think that it vanished in a moment, on the death of Trude. Dear lady. What a proud and cock-a-hoop person you have made of me ! For it has been said, very often, of some author, that his characters lived ; how often has it been said of any author, that one, at least, of his characters—*died* ?

On her grave I have planted roots that she was able to gather and bring to me, in a box, from a sunny corner of the castle grounds. They are very fine flowers. It is a very big mound. If you wish, I can take you to see it now, before the daylight dies. There is time.

LOVE AMONG THE RUINS OR IN SEARCH OF NOSELESS KNIGHTS AND DAMES

By DOUGLAS PERCY BLISS

“**W**HY don't you keep a better look-out and not suffer the fingers of figures and the noses of bustos to be knocked off by *them* Westminster Boys?” said Nollekens the sculptor one day to old Gayfere the Abbey-Mason. Gayfere replied: “Why, what an ungrateful little man you are! Don't it give you a job now and then?” For of course it falls to Nollekens and his kind to replace the missing fingers and noses of our church monuments. “It proves how little noses matter,” a well-known collector of modern paintings said to me recently, while we were looking at one of his Marie Laurencins. That charming artist never paints the noses of her figures, yet somehow nothing seems wanting, and it is remarkable how well old statues get along without noses. Indeed restorations of this feature have something absurd and cheap about them. Fresh, sharp, unclouded pieces of alabaster look irrelevant on mediaeval heads, and it is well that there have been but few restorations of this sort on our ancient recumbent effigies.

The phrase which I have chosen as an alternative title of this essay—“in search of noseless knights and dames”—occurs in a letter from Charles Stothard, the artist-antiquarian, to his wife. The letter is published with many others in that lady's *Memoirs* of her husband, and the phrase quoted has an almost frivolous ring, amid the sober narrative and trite reflections of which the book is composed. Charles Stothard was a historical draughtsman of extraordinary ability. In the combination of accuracy, grace and insight that he brought to bear upon his work there is no living man to whom he can be compared, if we except the authority on English mediaeval painting, Professor E. W. Tristram. A century has passed since Stothard's *Monumental Effigies of Great Britain* appeared; but though its literary matter is unscientific and long out of date, the plates have never been, nor are likely to be, superseded as diagrams of mediaeval costumes and ornament. No photographs tell us as much as Stothard's plates, and few books on the subject appear without borrowing from him for their blocks.

It was in a heraldic work that I first came across reproductions after Stothard's etchings and these so stimulated my curiosity that I sought the original work. From what I had seen in these half-tones I expected fine etching and consummate detail; but I was unprepared for the wealth of gorgeous illumination expended upon so many of the plates. It was from my admiration of Stothard's plates that I was led to read his *Memoirs* published in 1823 and to go further and consult his widow's *Autobiography* and other sources for details of his life and character.

Born in 1786, the son of the famous painter Thomas Stothard, R.A., Charles was early attracted to art. As a boy he developed a passion for mediaeval story and loved to wander about the country sighing for the days of Tournament and Romance. He loved three things chiefly all his life, drawing, history (particularly that of the Middle Ages) and the country. At the age of sixteen his father went to Burleigh House, seat of the Marquis of Exeter, to decorate the staircase with paintings. He took Charles with him, and, to keep the boy occupied, sent him out to the churches around to draw the Monumental effigies. It was thus that his general love of Gothic things got a particular bias. In 1807 Charles became a student under Fuseli at Somerset House School of Art, and in the year following was admitted into the Life Academy. Two years later he was introduced at a private theatrical entertainment to a lady who was to become the central figure in his life. The entertainment was arranged by members of a respectable London family, the Kempes, and the principal lady was the daughter of the house, Anna Eliza Kempe, a delicate but vivacious girl of nineteen with an eager and ingenuous spirit, a great zest for knowledge and a head clustered with ringlets. Alfred Kempe, her brother, was later an F.S.A., and from the start Charles Stothard's greatest friend. Eliza was not long in winning his heart. It was through her love of drawing that her father had sought the acquaintance of the elder Stothard, whose life she was later to write and whom she always loved to call "our English Raphael." Charles soon made it his pleasant duty to instruct her upon the principles of art. With what enthusiasm tempered with propriety he must have held forth to this perfect pupil upon Correctness, Strictness, Decision of Drawing and so forth. And doubtless it never wearied the enthusiastic Eliza to hear him urge with the solemn conviction of his age and school that the study of the antique was indispensable and that "to copy Raphael would give the purest taste."

In 1810 Stothard painted his first and only historical composition, having for subject the murder of Richard II at Pomfret Castle. With characteristic regard for accuracy he made studies of the head and garments of the king from the effigy upon his tomb at Westminster. The picture was exhibited at the Royal Academy and voted a great success. At this time Charles Stothard aspired to be a historical painter like his father. But he was well aware that it would be hard to succeed where so many struggled in vain. His father had not been without great anxiety for money. Indeed according to Blake, who loathed him, his soul was in money. Fuseli, West, Barry, Opie, Haydon all struggled hopelessly at this time and later to interest John Bull in "high art" in general, and their favourite historical inventions in particular. Charles Stothard well knew that most of them had to paint portraits or do other even less exalted things in order to secure a living. Moreover the prospect of penurious years was intolerable to the suitor of Eliza Kempe. It was clear to him that fame as a historical painter and the hand of Eliza could not both be achieved, and love proved more powerful than ambition. He had confessed his passion to Eliza and

persuaded her to agree to a conditional engagement. In order to earn for himself fame, and, thereby, the money and independence necessary in order to marry he determined to pursue exclusively the study of Monumental Antiquities. That any one should hope for gain in such fields seems strange to us, and was no less strange to his friends and relations. But he persevered.

Eliza, too, had schemes. Very successful in private theatricals and worshipping the great Siddons, she turned her thoughts towards a stage career. There were qualms, of course. The profession had an unsavoury name ; but Eliza was in love. Fortunately an actor called Dowton came upon the scene who admired her performance and did his best to introduce her to the stage. Through his agency a chance came her way of playing Desdemona against Kean's Othello at Bath Theatre. But she was unable to be there in time. Soon after, however, another chance occurred. She was actually billed to play in another part, and hurried post-haste to Bath with her mother. Again fortune frowned upon her. She fell ill on arrival and was confined to her bed during all her stay in that city. Thus perished Eliza's hopes of a theatrical future. The Kempes returned to London in June, 1815, meeting on the way the coach which bore the news of Waterloo.

In 1810 Charles Stothard first saw the etchings of monumental effigies in Parisian churches which had been made by the Rev. T. Kerrich, Librarian of the University Library at Cambridge. So greatly did these plates excite his admiration that he determined thereupon to carry out a similar project for our British tombs of the same period. Great attention was to be given to the costume and accessories, and it was hoped that the plates would be of great value to the historical painters of the period (who had the absurdest ideas about mediaeval armour, etc.), and also (as Charles pointed out) "to assist the stage in selecting its costume with propriety for the plays of our great dramatic bard."

Gough had preceded him in the four magnificent folios of his *Sepulchral Monuments* ; but Gough, though prodigiously erudite, was himself no artist, and had to depend upon the services of all sorts of draughtsmen and engravers for the preparation of his illustrations. William Blake, at that time apprenticed to the engraver Basire, undoubtedly made certain drawings of the Westminster tombs and assisted in the preparation of the plates. Under the engraving of Queen Philippa (Lethaby says) for "Basire delineavit" we may safely read "W. Blake." But it matters little, for they are works of no value. With good reason did Stothard complain of Gough's illustrations, for he himself first managed to draw Gothic things without introducing the alien mannerisms of his period.

The separations from Eliza which his peregrinations in study of tombs enforced were terribly painful to Charles. So acutely did he feel anxiety in leaving his beloved's side that he was often so depressed that there was danger that his efforts might be paralyzed. His prospects were uncertain, remuneration lagged behind reputation, and a lover's fears saw rivals for the hand of Eliza in every eligible young man. To allay his anxieties they

secretly married. In doing so Eliza disobeyed her parents and for the rest of her life never quite forgave herself the deceit. Indeed she never mentions their clandestine marriage either in the *Memoirs* of her husband or her *Autobiography*, and only the casual remark of her godson and editor betrays her secret to posterity.

When Charles was making his antiquarian expeditions, the state of the monuments in our churches was far worse than it is now. Whitewashing was the habit then in vogue for "refreshing" those venerable figures. Most of the effigies were smothered and blunted in successive coats of whitewash. But matters were often worse. At Wingfield Charles found the splendid wooden effigies of the Earl and Countess of Suffolk, but deplored how "the spirit of repairing and beautifying has now covered them with a thick and impenetrable coat of white paint." The same spirit since Stothard's time has led to the covering of another wooden effigy, that of Sir Hugh Bardolf at Banham, with sand to make it look like stone; while the figure of King John at Hereford, upon which Stothard made out traces of the original colour, has since been covered with unpleasant gilding. Stothard always began by scraping the effigies with a pen-knife and brushing them with a nail-brush until the crust of plaster, whitewash, and house-painting was removed, revealing the ornaments and modelling of the figures. At Ash in Kent he found a very interesting knight "buried in whitewash in some cases more than a quarter of an inch in thickness." At Whitchurch in Shropshire he

found a lump of plaister called John Talbot, the great Earl of Shrewsbury. Had it not been for the rain, I should not, I believe, have paid him any attention; but wishing to make the most of it, on that account, I literally uncased him, as you would an Egyptian mummy and so astonished the churchwardens that I left them hard at work there, with soft brushes and soap-suds, on the other monuments in the church.

But sometimes other agents than vicars and churchwardens were responsible for the whitewashing of effigies. Westminster was not the only church, great or small, at that time, where pigeons and other birds nested and flew in and out through the holes in the ancient glass. At Arundel Eliza found the chapel with the tombs of the Fitzalans in woeful state. One effigy, she wrote "appears very perfect; but as the owls roost immediately over him, his dress is much concealed by a new one given to him by them."

Of Charles's tramping from church to church all over the countryside we have a record in the letters published in his *Memoirs*. They are to a great extent chronicles of forced marches in the rain. Carrying his little portfolio of drawings in his bosom for protection he trudges on from place to place through the wet that brims the ditches and overspreads the meadows. Now and again he loses his way in unfrequented regions, falls and gets soused and nearly ruins his precious drawings. Despondency and "blue devils" are his frequent companions and the thought of Eliza haunts his ways. Disappointments are many. At Elsing he finds the

magnificent Hastings brass mutilated, but he rubs it as he rubs the gorgeous foreign brass at Lynn which shows the Merchant Braunch and his wives. With disgust he notes that a piece about 2 feet square is missing, from the right hand corner, and consequently "the peacock's feast is now ruined." Of another brass he tells the all-too-common tale of how a churchwarden gave it away as valueless, and it found its way to the melting-pot of a brass-founder.

On the other hand he has pleasant surprises. At Bunbury he finds the effigy of Sir Hugh Calveley :

in tolerable preservation considering the hazards he has already run of being pounded and given in powders to cattle, for alabaster, I understand, is a sovereign remedy for the rot in sheep and other disorders of that nature.

And at Warwick he has one of his greatest discoveries. While drawing the splendid latten figure of Richard de Beauchamp he notices that it is loose. Next day,

having locked the door for fear of interruptions, with the help of a mason who by good luck was working in the Church, I succeeded in the course of ten minutes in turning this massy figure completely over, laying him face downwards.

He found that the effigy of the great Earl was represented with no less care and accuracy at the back than at the front, and no fastening or joint was wanting. Indeed the figure was like a complete suit of armour. The delighted Charles made a beautiful drawing of the back which is of great value to the student of fifteenth-century arms.

In the pursuit of his monumental studies he took numerous risks and eventually lost his life. Eliza always feared that he might fall from a ladder while making a drawing of recumbent effigies from above. She never tired of warning him to take care. At Canterbury early in his study he was drawing by night in the Cathedral with the aid of a row of candles placed upon a plank. While sharpening a pencil the ladder slipped, and he fell, extinguishing the lights. Luck was with him and despite the knife in his hand he received no hurt ; but only with the greatest difficulty did he manage to grope his way out of the mighty Cathedral through the midnight darkness. At another time Eliza saw him at Westminster perched upon a ladder thirty or forty feet above the pavement. He held a drawing board in one hand and sketched with the other. In such ways he contrived to make his amazingly accurate and searching front-views of recumbent effigies. In order to copy the mural decorations revealed during restorations in the Painted Chamber of the House of Lords he stood upon a lofty scaffolding. There "almost stunned by the incessant noise of the workmen, amidst dust and every possible annoyance" he succeeded in making splendid studies from a position both difficult and perilous. In order to get a drawing of Aveline of Lancaster at Westminster he had to scale the cenotaph of Lord Ligonier which at that time completely obscured the beautiful thirteenth-century canopied tomb. Awaiting his opportunity he mounted the cenotaph, placed and lighted candles, and, unseen by the Abbey

attendants, aloft and "smothered with dust," he achieved a painstaking drawing for the plate of his great book.

Charles was slight in stature but active and robust. Some of his feats of walking are chronicled by Alfred Kempe, his brother-in-law and the writer of most of the descriptive notices accompanying the plates of the *Monumental Effigies*. In these days of bicycles and motor-cars it is difficult to realise that Charles was frequently obliged to trudge scores of miles upon foot for lack of other means of conveyance. The antiquarian of to-day arrives by car and photographs his monument. Charles arrived after a long walk and set to work with his drawing materials, continuing while light endured, or even, as we have seen, by candle-light. His nights were spent in village public-houses amid considerable discomforts. His note of the very last inn in which he slept a few days before his death runs: "Pork just killed in the room where I took tea, a hard bed and no want of fleas." Added to the discomforts of these journeys was the lack of congenial company. Alfred Kempe in his solemn way has given us the following description of Charles in the village ale-house. "Seated by the huge chimney, the burning brands illuminating the ample hearth, the motley group of rustics around, Charles would listen to their conversation and note it down when it took a singular or comic turn; or he would take out his little sketch-book and delineate their boorish features. 'There is great pleasure,' he would say 'in observing the character of man in all its forms. How often in a village ale-house,' would he add, 'have I recognised the clowns of our inimitable Shakespeare.'"

In 1811 Charles published the first number of his *Monumental Effigies* which contained twelve plates and was succeeded at intervals by eleven other numbers each containing the like number of plates. All the drawings were made by Charles; but as the work was left incomplete by his death, the last three plates of the ninth, and all those of the three subsequent numbers, published by the exertions of his widow, were etched by other hands. With these exceptions Charles himself etched all the plates numbering one hundred and twenty in all. It would be difficult to praise them too highly of their kind. They combine to a remarkable degree accuracy and truth to the spirit of the originals with an exquisite sense of the etched line, delicate yet never feeble, rich yet always sensitive in touch. Handsome as are the plates of Hollis and Blore whose works of a similar nature followed upon his tracks, they cannot compare with those of Charles. The difficulties that lay in the way of his project would have discouraged one of less ingenuity and intrepidity. Many of the effigies which he represents as though standing in full front-elevation in reality are recumbent under low canopies of stone or flat testers of wood. To draw such as these even ladders could have availed little and it is difficult to see how they were done. In the case of Sir John Peche at Eynsford the effigy is covered by a horizontal slab not more than eighteen inches from the face. Nevertheless, writes his brother-in-law, Charles was not repulsed. "By the aid of a graduated line [he drew all his monuments by scale] he brought all the

parts into their due relative proportion and in two days produced the drawing."

Along with the full figures viewed from above or the sides Charles usually etched interesting details of armour, sword-hilts, belts, coronets and the like. He had an unerring sense of pattern and in the making-out and drawing of decorated details he showed a sympathetic insight that can only be paralleled in historical draughtsmanship in the work of the living artist to whom I have already compared him, Professor Tristram of the Royal College of Art. The etching and illumination of these details are in some respects the most interesting thing in Charles' work. A century ago more traces remained of the gay original colour of mediaeval effigies. Charles made use of these traces to give his diagrams the wealth of colour that the original effigies bore in the days of their splendour. In the illumination of the details he employed a youth, whose delicacy of touch was remarkable, and under Charles' supervision the colour-details were worked out with impeccable taste and accuracy. I know of no better way of getting to understand the splendour of mediaeval sepulchral art than by reading Lethaby's descriptions of the tombs at Westminster and by studying Charles Stothard's plates.

The publication of his *Monumental Effigies*, number by number, brought Charles considerable reputation. Sir Joseph Banks thought him the most promising young man in England and the Society of Antiquaries offered him the post of historical draughtsman. He accepted and was sent to Normandy in 1816 to make a complete copy of the Bayeux Tapestry for the Society. It was not long before Charles sought out Fontevrault with the purpose of preparing plates for his work from the effigies of the Plantagenet kings and queens, who, as everyone knows, were buried in that Abbey.

If the Reformation and the Puritan Rebellion had played havoc with our British churches it was as nothing to the destruction wrought by the Revolution in France. Throughout the length and breadth of Northern France Charles found the churches devastated and stripped of monuments. Fontevrault had become a prison, and in a cellar Charles discovered piled up together like logs, the effigies of the Plantagenets. The chapel which once enshrined them had been ruined and the effigies consigned to the cellar, where prisoners daily came to draw water. Charles made many studies, and, when he returned to England, urged the authorities to intervene, and, if possible, save the figures from further mutilation. In March, 1817, the Prince Regent proposed to Louis XVIII that the statues should be exchanged for certain miniatures of Jehan Fouquet. He urged that they presented no interest to the French; but were English monarchs, and might be placed with their descendants who lie buried under their effigies at Westminster. However, the Prefect of Maine-et-Loire refused to consider the offer, and when, two years later, the matter was re-opened, he again refused to part with the Angevin statues. Twice again the proposal was made—the last time being in 1866 when Napoleon III listened to the persuasions of "his dear cousin," Queen Victoria. But the French public

remained firm, if the Emperor wavered, and the effigies of Henry II, Richard Coeur-de-Lion, Eleanor of Aquitaine and Isabella, the Queen of John, remain to this day at Fontevault.

Having drawn these figures Charles now went to the Abbey of L'Espan near Le Mans in search of Berengaria. Again he found the Abbey ruined and the monuments scattered. The Abbey had become a barn and under a load of wheat lay the effigy of Coeur-de-Lion's bride. After a great deal of trouble he induced the churlish proprietor to remove his wheat so that the effigy might be seen and drawings made. It was while delayed at Le Mans by his dealings with the farmer that Charles discovered in the Museum of that town the famous enamel-tablet surmised to represent Geoffrey, Earl of Maine, the ancestor of the Plantagenet kings.

Again Charles went to Bayeux to copy, and on the third occasion Eliza accompanied him as his wife. After completing the work the lovers made a tour through Normandy, Brittany and other parts of France, which was described by Eliza in daily letters to her mother, and subsequently published, with plates after Charles' drawings of landscape and architecture. In the course of their journey the search for noseless knights was continuous. Eliza had prepared for the expedition by a thorough study of Froissart and hoped to encounter effigies of some of his heroes. But so drastic had been the Revolutionary pillage that little of monumental interest remained. At Josselin in Brittany, it is true, they did find the tomb of the great Sir Oliver de Clisson ; but in what sad plight. The figure of the warrior was in three parts, the trunk in the church, the legs in a pile of broken masonry outside, the mailed head used by the local tobacconist to frighten birds from his garden ! The gentle Charles collected the parts, put them together as best he could and made a drawing.

On their return to England, Charles presented his copy of the Tapestry to the Society of Antiquaries, of which he was now made a member. Eliza was busy preparing for publication her letters written during the tour. Before these were published, however, Charles was once more commissioned to go to France to copy for the Society, and Eliza accompanied him. After a severe crossing, when Eliza had to complain of a berth swarming with fleas, they toured the Netherlands, making hundreds of drawings and viewing all Gothic remains with the eyes of liveliest sensibility. So well had Eliza learned to draw under the tuition of her husband that, if pressed for time and anxious to miss little that interested them in a place, they drew side by side. Charles drew one side of the market-place at Mechlin and Eliza the other, using the same proportions, with the result that one entire view was formed by the junction of the two parts ! Eliza too continued to pen daily effusions to her mother. The following is a sample of her style :

In the Castle of Louvain our warlike Edward and his gallant son after the martial toils of the field, frequently reposed and enjoyed the regal banquet. Here too Philippa, surrounded by the damsels of her suite, held her court, and surpassed them alike in courtesy and loveliness ; but now, silent is the voice of music which

once spoke within its halls ; and prostrate, like the prince who raised its stately pile, the Castle lies, a lone and mouldering ruin, the shelter of the night-bird and the bat !

On their return to England Eliza made her *début* before the public as an author. Her *Letters* met with a favourable reception and her literary ambitions were much encouraged. These few months were the happiest of their lives. The industry of Charles was being rewarded. Eliza's book was well reviewed, and soon she was to be a mother. Then came the tragedy. Charles had to set out for Devon to make certain drawings for a County History. In May 1821, writes Alfred Kempe, Charles "parted from his affectionate and pregnant wife", who was oppressed with vague forebodings of ill. Before he left she wrote down a list of warnings and precautions for Charles in his work. Among these, two, in the light of future events, have a tragic interest. Remembering his recklessness of heights Eliza wrote :

Do not clamber up rotten walls or tottering monuments.

Take care not to fall from high places.

Charles' destination was Beer-Ferrers in Devonshire. He made the last stages on foot, exploring churches in search of effigies and making landscape-sketches by the way. Arrived at the church of Beer-Ferrers he obtained permission to trace the figure of the founder upon the window of ancient glass. A ladder used by a much heavier man was provided, and on the 28th May, 1821, Charles began his tracings. Below him to the side was situated the tomb of Sir William Ferrers and his lady, whose stone effigies lie under the soffit of a low Gothic Arch. As Charles was working upon his tracing the rung of the ladder upon which he stood suddenly gave way. As he fell he must have turned to save himself, and down he came, smashing his head so violently against the projecting slab upon which the figures are recumbent, that his death must have been instantaneous. And thus it was that Charles Stothard at the early age of thirty-four met his death through one of those very monumental effigies to which he had devoted his genius. Three hours later they came to seek him and found the corpse outstretched at the foot of the tomb, clutching the broken pencil in its hand. They took him up and in examining his clothes came upon that paper upon which his anxious wife had written a list of observances for his safe-conduct.

It is not my intention to record the pitiful story of how the news was broken to the old artist, his father or to his wife. As Mrs. Bray, the latter survived to be famous enough in her day as the author of a score of volumes of romance, travel and biography which the world has willingly let die. But one incident of her old age, because of its bearing upon the career of Charles, may seem worth mentioning here. *The Times* of August 31st, 1881, bore a review of a recent volume on the Bayeux Tapestry with the following passage :

So far back as 1820, Mrs. Stothard's letters, with engravings and drawings by her husband were published. We are sorry that this lady should still be gibbeted in

reputation in the Library at Bayeux for an offence, which, however inexcusable, should now be forgotten. Impelled by a feminine instinct, she cut out a small piece of the border and took it away with her. Not long since the scrap passed into the possession of the authorities of the South Kensington Museum, and was by them restored to the Maire of Bayeux. As the little gap had already been filled by the restorer, the original piece is now placed above it, with an inscription detailing the unhappy event.

It is not hard to imagine with what agitation the aged lady read the above account. Ransacking her memory of events more than sixty years past she remembered that Charles had possessed two fragments of the tapestry, but one she had never seen, and both were in his hands before she accompanied him to Normandy. Her indignation and shame at the stigma made so deep an impression upon her frail mind and body that it undoubtedly hastened her end two years later. A nephew, however, took up the cudgels in her behalf and even succeeded in having the inscription removed from the walls of the Bayeux Library.

In her extreme old age the memory of her youth recurred to her continually, and she imagined that Charles had been to see her again, or she brooded over their love and the deceit that her secret marriage had been. And when she died in 1883, sixty-two years after the death of Charles, her godson and editor opened the cabinet where she kept all her most precious papers and relics. There were the hundreds of letters which the Southneys had written to her, when she was Mrs. Bray, the writer, and lived at the Vicarage in Tavistock. And there were the relics of the great tragedy of her life—the sketch-book with Charles' last drawings made on the fatal journey and the last letter she received from him, delivered on the very day he died. There too were his nightcaps and the little delicately worked garments of their child and an old pincushion with the inscription in pins "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." And in another drawer lay the casts that Flaxman, the sculptor, had taken of her child—the face, two hands and breast. Upon the top of this drawer, says her godson, she placed a paper inscribed in her own hand :

Be careful in this drawer.

Cast taken after death by Flaxman of my most beloved child, Blanch Anna Eliza Stothard, aged seven months.

"Suffer little children to come unto me, for of such is the kingdom of Heaven."

THE NINE MUSES

IV. Terpsichore, or The Muse of Dancing

By THOMAS DERRICK













MANON LESCAUT

By OSBERT BURDETT

“WE follow Manon Lescaut over the whole world.” This was the sentence that first drew my attention to the famous story by the Abbé Prévost d’Exiles, and I remember how I left my rooms in Cambridge in order to possess the book, and how from that first reading it has remained one of my favourites, another being *La Dame aux Camélias*. How many now, I wonder, will recognize whence this tribute to the charm of Manon comes? Those who do will have no difficulty in divining how the tastes of a certain undergraduate were forming, and now that I have re-read it again for the latest of many times, it stands as high in my admiration as ever. This particular edition* has qualities of its own, for Miss Waddell has won deserved recognition for her renderings and hardly less so for her inimitably skilful introductions, while Professor Saintsbury’s criticism is, like the story of Manon, one to which we can return, and he has read this story (he tells us) at twenty, and forty and at sixty and at eighty with unabated enjoyment, so that the ripest reflexions of a ripe critic here accompany the English text. This text is that of the earliest edition; and Miss Waddell’s choice of the earliest is important because one reason why *Manon Lescaut* is a perfect story is that the reader feels it to have been written at a single stretch. Later the wandering Abbé, whose adventures are followed by both his present translator and his critic, revised and expanded, and modulated his style. The virgin freshness of the story is best preserved in its earliest form, and any who regret the omission of the curious episode with the Italian Count will find this, too, in an appendix. I know no better English edition than this, and the reader who first meets the Chevalier des Grieux and his faithless but devoted Manon in these pages will find this immortal pair of lovers in a volume of scholarship and charming form.

The Abbé, whose masterpiece this is, had a chequered youth and the tale of Manon suggests so irresistibly personal experience that it is well to glance at his life since there is an incident therein which may have given birth to the story, an incident that took place just before its publication, the bicentenary of which we are now celebrating. Manon and the Chevalier des Grieux have been famous for two hundred years. Their creator (who seems to be dissolved in them) should not be forgotten at their bicentenary.

Prévost, the son of a lawyer, was born in 1697, and was educated by the Jesuits for the priesthood, but at the age of nineteen he joined the army, left it to return with a commission, and then took refuge from an unhappy love-affair with the Benedictines of St. Maur in 1720. Six years later he was

* *Manon Lescaut*. By the Abbé Prévost d’Exiles. Translated from the Original text of 1731 by Helen Waddell. With an Introduction by George Saintsbury. Constable. 15s.

ordained priest, and in 1728, after eight years of teaching and study, sought to be transferred to Cluny, but before his Brief arrived he left the abbey of St. Germain-des-Prés, without leave, and only escaped imprisonment by taking flight to England. Part of his study had been devoted to writing the *Memoirs of a Man of Quality withdrawn from the World*, and it was in that numerous series of volumes that the pearl of *Manon Lescaut* was first buried. There it escaped notice until, in 1733, a bookseller of Rouen had the enterprise to issue the novel alone when it created a sensation. The *Journal de la Cour*, quoted by Miss Waddell, contained the following : " A few days ago there appeared a new volume of the Memoirs of a Man of Quality. The book is written with such art and in such interesting fashion that one sees decent folk melting for pity over a sharper and a whore." The authorities were scandalised ; the book was seized by the police, and a distinguished lawyer wrote to a friend that "this abominable book" had only one good phrase—that she was so beautiful she might have brought back idolatry to the universe. At the date of this letter, December 15, 1733, the Abbé was arrested in London on suspicion of having forged a note of considerable value, but five days later he was discharged either because his alleged victim (a former pupil) refused to prosecute, or else because the charge broke down. Thus it appears that Prévost was placed in the situation of his hero, the Chevalier ; that he had met a Mdle. Lenki at the Hague, who attached herself to him after having drained the pockets of her earlier admirers, and that on her suggestion he had brought her with him to London where his own debts and her necessities may have tempted him to extremes. The incident tempts us to wonder if the tale of Manon may not have been written during the Abbé's first ardour for this " young lady of merit and birth, whose fortunes are affected by diverse accidents that are nothing to the point." However that may be, his own life soon passed into quieter waters. He became reconciled with his superiors, was appointed almoner to the Prince de Conti, was a welcome guest at the best dinner-tables in Paris, and spent his life translating Richardson's novels until he died suddenly at Chantilly in 1763.

The tale of Manon is simplicity itself. A young man, whose exemplary life is about to lead him to the priesthood, suddenly sees a girl stepping from the coach at the inn at Amiens on the day before his own departure from the town. The sight immediately fired his inexperienced heart " to the pitch of ecstasy and madness." When he learns that she is destined for a convent by her family, he flies with her to Paris, and there the want of money (which she cannot do without) leads her into one infidelity after another while never alienating her real affection from him. The infatuated youth rescues her from one crisis after another. She has no scruples in robbing the rich old men whose temporary mistress she becomes, and, knowing that only his poverty can rob him of her, the Chevalier cheats at cards and sticks at nothing to indulge or save her. Finally, she is transported to America, whither her lover follows, and there, when a respectable life is opening for both, the moment when they reveal that they are not

already married, misfortune descends upon them and Manon dies. Nothing, except possibly the success of some of his ruses for escape, is in the least improbable in the breathless story. We share the Chevalier's infatuation; we believe in Manon's charm; we cannot defend the practices of either, but we love them both, and we feel that the description that we have been "melting for pity over a sharper and a whore" is totally inadequate. The discrepancy between the warmth of our feelings and its apparent cause is a hoary problem of criticism. The story is beyond praise, and if nothing new can be said, its admirers, that is to say all who read it, are never tired of discussing it.

In the first place, the Chevalier des Grieux was not a sharper. He was a young gentleman, cast off by his family, who in desperate straits, occasionally and reluctantly, yielded to a temptation that is only not permitted to gamblers, and the urgency of which is the real argument against playing cards for a living. Far from his gambling being the chief interest in his life, it is a flaw, confessed by himself, in a soul whose disinterested devotion is the most conspicuous element in his character. Love is the mainspring of his existence. It is as a lover that we canonise him, and in his chief claim upon us there is not a single lapse. Even his cheating is not for his own benefit. His very lapses occur to satisfy the love of his life. With Manon herself, no doubt, justification is less simple. Her real point of honour was not to be poor, and she falls below the Chevalier in virtue because she will sacrifice her inclination for money. Now she could not do this if physical faithfulness were important in her own eyes; but it is not. She is horrified and puzzled that her lover should suffer so much from surrenders that are made only to provide herself and him with the luxury that is necessary to her existence. In this respect she is less a sinner than a child. Her conscience does not suffer in the least from her own infidelities because, in this matter, she has none. The sacredness of the human body is a sense that she is without; and I believe far more women to be without it than is commonly imagined, for instinct enforced by tradition has made the admission seem so disgraceful that even women who have no natural feeling for constancy would die rather than admit their lack. This absence of a conscience in Manon is further accompanied by other want of scruples, a want that does seem commonly to belong to it. She cheats her elderly lovers, robs them and steals their jewels, without any sense of shame. It is here that she belongs to the harlots. Where she differs from them is in her capacity for affection, since her heart belongs to des Grieux from the first. All we can say of her is that she is completely irresponsible, would have been faithful had her lover remained in funds, and is keenly alive to the fun of playing criminal practical jokes upon her elderly admirers. We cannot help laughing with her at their deception, though it would be hopeless to convince her that her conduct is wrong. The saying "love is too young to know what conscience is" is perfectly illustrated in Manon, but it is a very remarkable tribute to her capacity for affection that we accept her as a lover whatever her infidelities may be.

The art of the story consists in convincing us of this, and yet, for the most part, we have only the Chevalier's word for it. Manon herself does not do or say anything specially memorable ; but the Chevalier is so patently sincere, and makes such tremendous sacrifices for her, that we believe every word he tells us of her charm and beauty. The sincerity of the Chevalier is sincerity enough for two! The woman who could infatuate a man so loyal must have been a woman in a thousand. Another supreme quality in the story is the contrast between the manner of its telling and the substance of the tale itself. It is one of the great love-stories. Its interest is the interest of a passion. The whole story turns on an obsession of the senses, and yet there is not a note, not a phrase, of carnality from beginning to end. Manon inspired, the Chevalier felt, and readers of their adventures share, a great spiritual experience ; and the human heart and imagination were responding to a noble impulse when they surrendered to the story. It was the authorities who were pharisaical in turning it down. The effect of the story is a revelation of pure devotion, and that Manon was not entirely worthy of it enhances its value :

Love is not love that does not deeper live
For having something dreadful to forgive.

People with wayward hearts but constant practice are common. Manon was one whose heart was constant but whose person was the plaything of her purse. There could be no more convincing illustration that "love is above the sacraments" and that the heart alone decides where love is ultimately to be found. Nobody who reads the book will take other than a high inspiration from it. Nobody will doubt that they have seen true love face to face. The most innocent and the most guilty will carry away the same feeling. Plainly, the story is not a picture of "a sharper and a whore."

We read it first with a sense of pure enjoyment. It carries us straight to the last page ; but when we return and re-read, there is the added pleasure of criticising. *Manon Lescaut* is one of those tales that begin with a miracle. The reader has to be convinced of the hero's infatuation at once. This accomplished, the tale illustrates the old rule that there must be no further draft on his credulity. It is a novel of incident, and one grows out of the other in the most natural way in the world. The flight involves the two children, for they are both in their teens, in a short honeymoon followed by the spectre of poverty. We are delighted to share Manon's confidence that this can be easily dispelled, and she is so charming that we share her lover's belief that her relatives will come to the rescue. The little signs of extravagance that her housekeeping begins to show seem to justify her confidence, and prepare us deceptively for the shock of his discovery that she has secretly sold herself to a wealthy neighbour. Her excuses are so childlike that we are ready to forgive her since there is no reason to suspect that her love has disappeared. The series of similar disasters that follow whenever the unfortunate boy is again reduced to straits never destroys this faith in Manon, and we begin to feel that the stars in their

courses are fighting against the lovers, and are more inclined to pity than to blame. Now we could not do this if either of the pair were utterly ignoble, and it is the Chevalier who convinces us that Manon was not.

Her path to perdition, as an evangelical would call it, is enforced by all the circumstances of her life. The appearance of her brother raises our hopes, but he, far from lending any aid, proposes at once that she should support him by her surrenders. The brother, we feel, is much worse than she, and his villany lends to her the grace of contrast. Except for her lover, Manon does not meet a single decent person in the world. The brother is more convincing than des Grieux's friend, Tiberge, who has the sense without the grace of goodness, but his earliest remonstrances with the Chevalier, when he learns of the proposed flight, are extraordinarily true to life. This is the passage in which Tiberge is introduced :

I am certain, said he, with no attempt at disguise, that you are meditating some design that you want to hide from me : I see it by your manner. I replied brusquely enough that I was not obliged to give him an account of all my designs. No, he made answer, but you have always treated me as a friend, and that relation supposes a little confidence and openness. He pressed me so long and so close to tell him my secret, that I, who had never yet kept anything from him, at last confided to him the story of my passion. He listened with a look of dissatisfaction that made me tremble. Above all, I repented my indiscretion in having acquainted him with the plan of my flight. He told me he was too utterly my friend not to oppose it with all his might : that he would try to persuade me from it with every argument he could : but that if finally I would not give up my miserable determination, he would warn those who could put a stop to it without fail. Thereon he read me a lecture. . . .

How we all recognize that friend, and how at such a moment we hate and dread him ! Tiberge is at his best here. Later he becomes rather wooden and prosy, though an excellent foil to his more enthusiastic friend. Manon herself is introduced with great skill, for in their first conversation, when her servant's back is turned, she contrives to reveal her native resource the moment when the man comes back to interrupt her :

Meantime her old Argus had come up to us, and my hopes were about to be dashed, but that she had wit enough to supply the barrenness of mine. I was surprised, as her escort joined us, to hear her call me cousin, and tell without a shadow of embarrassment that since she had been so lucky as to meet me in Amiens, she would put off her admission to the Convent till to-morrow, so as to have the pleasure of supping with me.

The minx ! Was she already experienced when she met the young Chevalier, or was she one who did naturally whatever she wanted to do without a moment's hesitation ? We are not told. Both might seem equally likely, but her spontaneity was the soul of her charm, and she was as instinctively playful as a squirrel. These two strokes shew the art of Prévost in bringing his characters to life at their first words. They never disappoint us. Every word in this wonderful story is inspired, and the inspiration has fallen on the translator. Though the story is told in the first

person, the narrator never gets in the way, and the melody of the prose has the music of a soliloquy and a reminiscence. Manon is early revealed in all her weakness, for while we can understand her yielding to the seductions of her first rich admirer, it would be impossible to forgive her for conniving at her lover's arrest by his father if she had not later herself returned and sought him out. The scene in which she does this, and confesses her defection, is crucial, for we have to be convinced that she was worth forgiving. She confesses everything, and we do forgive. Manon in her own person is irresistible.

Much could be deduced from *Manon Lescaut* on the art of story-telling. It is a model from which the chief canons can be learned. The first point is that the creation of character is the root and basis of the art. The second that character is best revealed in action, and in the words that are the action of a dialogue. A particular character will always react to circumstances in a characteristic way, but, since few characters are simple, not necessarily by the same reaction. Manon, for instance, can never resist the same temptation. When money is short the Chevalier is always in dread of losing her, and the invention appears in the variety that a similar set of circumstances will give to this temptation at different times and among kindred but different people. We know Manon chiefly by her actions and by the excuses that she makes for them. There are few characters in fiction that we understand so well, and yet of "psychology" or character-drawing, in the current sense of these terms, there is none. The truth seems to be that character-drawing, in the sense of analysis, only occurs when a writer's invention is weak. He therefore expends upon the dissection of motives and the examination of feeling the energy that should be spent upon setting the character to live. It will have been noticed that little or nothing happens in most "psychological" novels, and that the happenings are incredible in stories in which the divination of character is weak. Once a character has been vividly conceived, its introduction is enough to set the story going, for the preliminary situation will give rise to others in proportion as the character and its satellites have been clearly seen. Thus the other resource of the uninventive novelist, plot, a mechanical pattern into which the people concerned have to be squeezed, is superfluous to the imaginative story-teller. There is no plot in *Manon Lescaut*. On the contrary, the story holds the reader because one incident seems to issue from another with the inevitability of a breaking flower. There is no "manufacture of a misunderstanding" the resolution of which is the recipe of the "well-made" play or novel. Half an hour spent on examining how one incident grows naturally out of another would provide an object-lesson for any student of this tale.

The climax is a stroke of genius. It has the valuable effect of a surprise, but reflexion shows the catastrophe to have been inevitable; and this climax would have been missed by anyone with a sense of character less profound. The lovers have reached America. Being superior to most of their fellow-captives, they win the favour of the Governor. A minor post

at the Fort was given to des Grieux, and the chance of a respectable and happy life for both the lovers began. A happy ending seems to be in sight, but the author's imagination is neither tired nor sleeping. What, as we see in retrospection, was bound to happen next ?

The innocence of our pursuits and the unbroken tranquility in which we lived served to recall us, little by little, to a spirit of devotion and of religion. Manon had never been irreligious, nor had I been one of those extravagant freethinkers who make it their glory to add impiety to depravity of morals. Love and youth had caused all our excesses. Experience was beginning to take the place of age ; it brought us something of the effect of years. Our conversations, which were always thoughtful, brought us insensibly to a desire for a virtuous love. I was the first to propose a change to Manon. I knew the principles of her heart. . . . We have no obstacle to fear. I am going to speak of it this very day to the Governor, and confess to him that we have been deceiving him until now.

Alas ! no sooner did the Governor learn that des Grieux was not married to the beautiful girl, than he agreed to gratify his nephew, who had cast admiring eyes upon her since she came ; and the pious intention to rectify their position proved the undoing of the luckless pair. Des Grieux and the nephew, meeting after this occurrence, fight a duel. The nephew is apparently killed. Flight is their only hope. Manon dies from the exposure, giving " tokens of love " with her last breath, and after receiving a pardon the Chevalier returns to France, to remain a haunting memory to all who have heard him.

This climax was, no doubt, an imaginative addition to the original of the story. It is an exquisite end, and it leaves to our imagination the surviving figure of the lover, as it were the ghost that Manon herself had left behind. The imagination, satisfied by her death, is not surfeited with his. His own survival, indeed, is part of his tragedy ; and the tragic note which attends the punishment that followed upon the attempted return of the pair to the way of virtue justifies the previous belief of the reader that there was much in the lovers to pity and to excuse. The end combines the three perfect but rare qualities of an ending : it is surprising ; it is natural ; it leaves something unfinished, as in those rare but great moments of life when the horizon is lifted and heaven seems near.

To the student of narrative, the episode with the Italian prince, here relegated to the appendix, will provide a further object-lesson. Is, he must ask himself, the story better without it, or does the episode provide a welcome interlude of comedy in the scarcely interrupted succession of the lovers' troubles ? If it is to be admitted, the student will perceive how a new episode can be characteristically introduced. If we reject it, our reason will be that nothing should mar the simplicity of the original story. *Manon Lescaut* is read and re-read first of all for its own sake, but reflexion, when it comes, will linger as lovingly upon its art as the youngest reader upon the humanity and truthfulness of its two principal characters.

This original version has never been translated into English before. It is a perfect rendering, and enriches our literature with a liquid prose of sweet and stately melody.

A COSMOPOLITAN NOVELIST

By GRACE CHAPMAN

I

HUGH STOWELL SCOTT, or Henry Seton Merriman (to give him the name by which he is best known to the critics and to the reading public generally, and by which he will be referred to in these pages), was born at Newcastle-upon-Tyne on the 9th May, 1862. His father was a ship-owner, and his mother was the daughter of James Wilson Carmichael, the marine artist. He was educated at Loretto School, and was afterwards sent to Vevey and Wiesbaden, where he acquired in his most impressionable years the keen desire for travel and the passionate interest in foreign lands, peoples and customs which remained with him to the end of his short life. His parents were well-to-do, but his father was not disposed, at any rate at first, to allow him to lead the life of leisure and foreign travel which he would no doubt have preferred ; and, after his first early experiences of foreign lands (to which must also be added a voyage to India in childhood), he was put into an underwriter's office at Lloyd's. But he hated the commercial life and its surroundings, and seems to have devoted all his spare time to writing, in the single-minded pursuit of his great ambition. Between 1888 and 1891, he published four books : *Young Mistle*, *The Phantom Future*, *Suspense*, and *Prisoners and Captives*. The first was published anonymously : the rest, to avoid any recriminations, however slight, with his family, who do not appear at this period to have regarded his literary activities with any favourable eye, under the pseudonym with which he was destined to acquire in later years a certain amount of merited fame for careful work, well-constructed plots, and convincing presentations of the people, scenery and customs of other countries.

The early work of a man is almost inevitably bound to be immature, and Merriman's was no exception to the rule: indeed, his first four books are immature to a degree which makes it impossible to be surprised at his family's attitude to his efforts at writing. They are marred by an elderly moralising, frequent digressions from the point at issue, continual nudging of the reader and taking him aside to whisper to him arch confidences and alleged personal experiences, conventional characters and situations, and the triumph of the strong, silent man. Moralising and the admiration of silent strength, in fact, remained with him until the end. Here are two examples of the moralist of twenty-six :

The necessity for action comes to us all at some moments, and this usually happens between the ages of twenty-five and thirty-five—after the growing and before the vegetating period. . . .

She knew the thousand temptations that beset the path of a beautiful woman, the thousand little slips so easily made, the thousand hands ever ready to push the stumbler down the hill.

And this is another quotation from his first book :

The language of conversation is woefully limited. Whatever our feelings or our nature may be, we say what we wish to say by usage in precisely the terms that usage may dictate, and in the self-same words as are employed by thousands of other mortals to express the passing thought. Thus we may pass hours in the presence of a fellow-creature—hours made pleasant by the flow of easy conversation, and yet at the end we know no more of that fellow-creature's inward soul than we did at the beginning. . . .

and so on for nearly three pages, all leading up finally to the plain statement (although one would scarcely expect it, and it is indeed somewhat of a shock to come upon it) that a young woman, when she was singing, revealed that she had unsuspected depths in her nature ! A final quotation from *The Phantom Future* will show the worst characteristics of Merriman's early style :

Ah, those balls ! How many a tragedy has worked itself out while the musicians rubbed their hands together and rested during the pauses ! How many a breaking heart has whirled round a brilliantly-lighted room, and how many bright eyes have grown brighter or suddenly dim in sequestered corridors and twilight conservatory ! How many tears have been brushed aside with tiny lace handkerchiefs never woven for else than ornament ! It is better, however, to take these entertainments as they are. The smiling faces must assuredly belong to happy, careless hearts. The brilliant toilets, the gay light flimsy dresses must of course cover healthy young bodies untouched by disease or illness. Young, happy, careless—let them dance. Let hand clasp hand, and arm encircle waist. Let the old buffers like you and me, *mon ami*, lean against the wall and talk to the dowagers, without seeking to look beneath the surface of things. Only—only there is an uncomfortable memory behind this pen. Not ancient history by any means—not an old-time story improved by the crust of years—for it has lived only twelve hours—a few short night and morning hours ago. There was the usual brilliant room. The gay dresses were there—and the smiling faces. I did not know many of them—only half-a-dozen or so. And yet I know of tears—two of those young faces were wet with them during the evening. And the other side—the black-coated side of the question ! I see a life made and another marred. All this between the conventional hours of nine o'clock post meridian and two in the morning. Assuredly it is better to keep to the surface of things.

It is indeed, when plunging beneath it leads to such rhodomontade. Assuredly it is also better still for the novelist to keep to his point wherever possible.

But it is only fair to say that Merriman after a very few years realised the crudity and immaturity of his early works. With considerable difficulty and expense he withdrew his first four books from circulation in England, but was unable to prevent their republication in America. He was forced to content himself there with extensive revision and abbreviation, remaining, as he said in his preface, "conscious of a hundred defects which the most careful revision cannot eliminate."

II

Presumably during the course of 1891 Merriman met James Payn, then editor of *Cornhill*. Payn became interested in his work, and published his next novel, *The Slave of the Lamp*, as a serial. Its periodical appearance was popular, and it was also fairly successful when it was afterwards re-issued in book form in 1892. Payn remained one of his best friends and most valuable critics, and Merriman was always grateful for his shrewd advice and kindly encouragement. His next book, also published in 1892, *From One Generation to Another*, brought him enough recognition to justify him in abandoning Lloyd's, and embarking seriously upon his literary career. Life must have seemed very pleasant to him at the beginning of 1893 : his name was becoming known as that of a capable novelist ; his family was completely reconciled to his new career ; best of all, in the intervals of foreign travel, in which he could now frequently indulge, he was able to lead a peaceful and retired life in the country with his wife, working and reading. His attention to local colour and detail in his books was exemplary : with the exception of *With Edged Tools*, he described no country in any novel in which he had not travelled and with whose inhabitants, customs and traditions he was not familiar. And as all his books, except the youthful *Phantom Future*, deal chiefly with foreign countries, it will at once appear that he was a careful and intelligent observer and an industrious and conscientious worker. His preoccupation with other lands was indeed the only subject on which he disagreed with Payn, who had a theory that the insular nature of the ordinary English reader militated against the success of a book of which the scene was laid outside the British Isles !

We may as well here complete the brief narration of the main facts of his life, which it is impossible to dissociate from his work. He was a prolific writer : in the ten years of life which were now all that remained to him he wrote eleven full-length novels*, a volume of short stories, and two books of slight sketches, in which he collaborated with his wife's sister. He left a novel—*The Last Hope*—which was published posthumously, and is not the least successful of his books ; and about a dozen completed chapters and the outline of the plot of a book which dealt with the Peninsular War. But this fragment was destroyed at his death in accordance with his wishes, and so cannot be treated of here ; nor do I propose to say anything of his sketches and short stories, beyond the bare statement that they are not suited to his style, and afford full scope for the display of his faults, while effectually preventing the exhibition of his better characteristics as a writer.

He died suddenly of appendicitis on the 19th November, 1903, in his forty-first year, and is buried at Eltham in Kent.

*With the exception of the four early books, the suppressed *Dross*, and the two volumes of sketches written in collaboration, all Merriman's novels are published by Messrs. John Murray at 2s. each.

III

The year 1892, as we have said, saw the publication of two books by Merriman. *The Slave of the Lamp* deals with the fortunes and vicissitudes of a young journalist, apparently omniscient in the sphere of foreign politics. If we can accept the doubtful premise that the Society of Jesus (even in the admittedly curious and dangerous days following the collapse of the Second Empire) would trouble themselves to kidnap a journalist, however omniscient, because he had written articles which seemed to throw the blame for the condition of public affairs on the Society, it is a well-constructed and readable story, although it may seem surprising that it should have survived publication in serial and book form with the measure of success that did attend it. We may observe in passing that Merriman's anti-clericalism is one of his defects: the procession of doubtful figures clad in black cloaks who ascend dark staircases in his novels is very long, and they usually turn out to be priests. Sometimes a humble parish priest is allowed to do good to the poor, to be diligent in his office and in the administration of the Sacraments to his flock, but not very often; and even when he is, he is usually concerned in politics as well, and is hand in glove with brigands, Carlists, and other more or less disreputable characters.

The second book of 1892, *From One Generation to Another*, is of a very different kind. It is a rather ingenious variation of the old plot of the son and the stepson, the old and faithless lover, false newspaper reports, suppressed letters, and revenge. The strong, silent hero is again in evidence, but one will read very little of Merriman's work before being forced to reconcile oneself to meeting this paragon in one form or another in almost every book. The slight sketch of life at Cambridge seems to show once more that history repeats itself. At the end, the scene of the murder of the faithless lover by the betrayed woman's son is melodramatic, unnecessary and rather absurd, while the hero's return, after he has been falsely reported killed on a dangerous military mission in India, is rather too appropriate and opportune; but on the whole the book is well-written and interesting. One of the most attractive of the minor characters is an old family lawyer who "had some thirty years before this period given up attaching importance to the wishes of the deceased as interpreted by disinterested survivors."

IV

It was in 1894 that Merriman published his first really successful book, and it is one of his best. As has been said before, *With Edged Tools* is the only novel he wrote of which he had not visited the scene in person, and made himself thoroughly familiar with all its details. But he had read and studied all he could find in the way of information about the west of Africa, with the result that it is almost impossible to discover that his descriptions of scenery and atmosphere are not the outcome of personal experience and long familiarity with the *mise-en-scène*. The story turns upon the association in West Africa of two strong, silent Englishmen with

a half-caste Spaniard, Victor Durnovo, who has discovered the habitat of a valuable medicinal plant called simiacine, which like many patent medicines of our own day is alleged to cure innumerable maladies, even in the case of those patients who have been given up by ten hospitals. The character of Durnovo is admirably drawn, and the account of his death from sleeping-sickness, after he has been mutilated by the loss of his eyelids, nose, ears, and lips by the slaves whom he has atrociously ill-treated, is one of the most convincing and horrible scenes ever depicted in fiction. The hero, John Meredith, is less strong and silent than most of Merriman's heroes ; and he is even able to treat a worthless woman with something approaching what one feels Merriman must have considered a lack of chivalry. Jocelyn Gordon, the heroine, is less conventional and milk-and-watery than most of the author's women ; and more attempt has been made to give a definite character and a psychological explanation of that character to the worthless little " vamp " with whom Meredith and his associate in strength and silence, Guy Osgard, are both foolish enough to entangle themselves. It is a well-worked-out, and even an exciting, story, and would make an admirable film. It is curious, by the way, that no cinema director seems to have thought of Merriman in his search for an author whose works are suitable for adaptation to the screen. Many of them would make excellent films, and someone, more enterprising than the usual English director, should certainly turn his attention to Merriman.

The 1895 book, *The Grey Lady*, is conventional and sentimental, and the episode of the shipwreck is too melodramatically impossible for anything. Whatever Luke FitzHenry's unfortunate experiences in early youth may have done to his character, it is clear from the author's treatment of him throughout the rest of the book that they had not made him the sort of man to wreck his ship and drown all his passengers as a sign of his affection for a young woman who was one of them. Moreover the young woman in question is not of that kind for whom any decent man (as he undoubtedly was in spite of appearances) would throw away his honour and reputation, or even risk his life. She is both worthless and irritating ; and her mother, Mrs. Ingham-Baker, who is one of Merriman's foolish elderly women designed to provide a kind of mild comic relief, is negligible and not amusing. Mrs. Harrington, " the grey lady," who is suddenly called by this name without a word of warning (although it is subsequently and irrelevantly explained that she usually wore grey dresses), is a selfish and domineering woman of a type frequently encountered both in fiction and in real life, and she has no original or varying characteristics of her type to make her of any particular interest.

V

It is a relief to be able to turn to *The Sowers*. In its own day, it was Merriman's most popular book ; it ran through thirty editions in this country ; it was soon issued in the familiar Tauchnitz edition ; it had the distinction of being banned by the Russian censor. A Russian friend of the Scotts told the author's wife that it was one of the first books her

countrymen bought on crossing the frontier, because "we like to hear the truth about ourselves." It is well-constructed, extremely well-written, and what the advertisers of boys' books used to call packed with adventures—convincing and interesting adventures too, while the characterisation is admirable. It should certainly be made into a film. It is the story of a young man, Paul Alexis, half-English and half-Russian, educated in England, and with vast estates in Russia; where he tries to do his duty to the peasants by stealth, disguised as "the Moscow Doctor" whose name is one to conjure with throughout his extensive demesne; while the name of the Prince is execrated, threatening murmurs follow his sleigh wherever he drives it, and his castle is eventually attacked by the people he has tried to help, stirred up in their ignorance and poverty by paid agitators of the Nihilist type. He has before the opening of the book become involved with the Charity League, an organisation working in secret against the Government to educate the peasants and ameliorate their lot, formed by some of the more enlightened and humane landlords. The papers of this society are stolen by an unknown hand, and most of the main plot of the book is devoted to the gradual discovery of the thief. There are, as usual in Merriman's books, a good and a bad woman who influence the life of the hero; and, as usual, to begin with he marries the wrong one. The villain of the piece is a French diplomatist, one Claude de Chauxville; and, playing opposite him, as they say in the films, although usually in another connection, is Karl Steinmetz, Paul Alexis' right-hand man, adviser, helper and *deus ex machina* in chief throughout the book. Merriman's sympathies generally seem to be with the French as against the Germans, but in Steinmetz he has created an admirable representative of the race whom he usually appears to dislike; and has in contrast laid the black of villainy rather heavily on the Frenchman. Merriman was extremely interested in Russia and the Russian people: he had travelled a good deal in the country; and he has a prophecy about the recent Russian upheaval which it is worth while to quote here:

With us in England the poor man raises up his voice and cries aloud when he wants something. He always wants something—never work, by the way—and therefore his voice pervades the atmosphere. He has his evening newspaper, which is dear at the moderate sum of a halfpenny. He has his professional organisers, and his Trafalgar Square. He even has his members of Parliament. He does no work, and he does not starve. In his generation the poor man thinks himself wise. In Russia, however, things are managed differently. The poor man is under the heel of the rich. Some day there will be in Russia a Terror, but not yet. Some day the moujik will erect unto himself a rough sort of guillotine, but not in our day. Perhaps some of us who are young men now may dimly read in our dotage of a great upheaval beside which the Terror of France will be tame and uneventful. Who can tell? When a country begins to grow, its mental development is often startlingly rapid.

Had he lived until 1917, Merriman would have had cause to remember the words he wrote more than twenty years before.

Flotsam—his worst book—is one of his few novels with an unhappy

ending, as far as his lovers are concerned. It is a story of the Indian Mutiny, and most of its characters seem to be descended from some unrecorded and hitherto unknown adulterous intrigues of the characters of *Vanity Fair*. The hero, Harry Wylam, a weak and vain youth, is another George Osborne; Miriam Gresham, the Bishopgate merchant's daughter, owes a great deal to Amelia Sedley, although she has more strength of character; and the strong, silent Marqueray, who does his best to be Wylam's good angel, although with little encouragement and less success, has some affinities with that paragon, Major Dobbin; while Maria Lamond has most of the vices of Becky Sharp, without any of her charm. The story is the most conventional that can be imagined, and is heavily overloaded with a sugary and sentimental patriotism, of the worst flag-wagging and "thin red line" type.

VI

His next book, *Roden's Corner*, was published in 1898. The plot is very far-fetched, dealing as it does with the exploitation of a group of paper-makers collected from all over the world to manufacture at imminent risk to life a dangerous substance alleged to be used in paper-making and known as malgamite, enabling thereby an unscrupulous German scientist to amass a fortune. He is, however, prevented from the enjoyment of his ill-gotten gains, as his scheme, which has thrown dust in the eyes of a good many people who should have known better, is discovered, and he is eventually drowned in the mud of a canal at The Hague. The malgamite enterprise has been set on foot under the guise of charity, the promoters (including a foolish peer who gravitates from mere folly to downright villainy) having stated that they are rescuing the workers from dangerous conditions and putting them in healthy surroundings, with adequate provision for their wives and families—quite a garden village, in fact—where they can pursue their hitherto fatal trade with all its dangers removed. The workers are even more foolish than the peer, for it seems scarcely credible that even for five pounds a week they should consent to live and work in what approximates to a barbed wire entanglement which they are never allowed to leave without permission, with the cheerful accompaniment of daily deaths and stealthy and disguised funerals. The chief protagonists are cardboard villains and heroes, or stock figures of fun like the foolish peer. Merriman had tried to write a book with the same title and plot very early—before the publication of *Young Mistley*, in fact—and had given up the project because he was dissatisfied with his work. It would have been better if he had abandoned it permanently, for it is a very difficult idea to make anything convincing of anyhow, and he has definitely not succeeded.

For his next novel, *In Kedar's Tents*, Merriman betook himself to Spain, writing a story dealing with that country during the unsettled period of the Carlist Wars. The book opens in England, at the contemporaneous time of the Chartist Riots, when a young barrister takes on himself the crime of a friend, who has inadvertently killed the son of a landowner in

the North during a riot. This is an unconvincing opening, but it makes no difference to the story, and has little if any bearing on the plot, as Frederick Conyngham could have had all the adventures he has without his unnecessary Quixotism, and we never see the guilty friend again. He goes to Spain in search of adventure and flight from justice, and is immediately plunged into the toils of shipwreck and of love, and the turmoil of the Carlist warfare. Conyngham is rather an attractive youth, and not quite as silent as some of his predecessors. Comic relief is provided by a foolish elderly woman, like Mrs. Ingham-Baker in *The Grey Lady*, or the Countess Lanovitch in *The Sowers*, and by the engaging conversation of one Concepcion Vara, a smuggler who attaches himself to Conyngham as a servant. There is plenty of adventure, but it is somewhat laborious, and not even the escape of the Queen-Regent is exciting; while the book reads rather as if Merriman were tired of it when he was writing it, but felt forced to go on. There is a parish priest, much beloved of his people, who does not escape the taint of politics, although he is on the right side for once. And there are the usual restrained love-scenes, of which the following may be taken as an example:

The sun had not set when Conyngham with a beating heart made his way through the house into the garden. He had never been so serious about anything in his life. Indeed, his life seemed only to have begun in that garden. Estella was there. He saw her black dress and mantilla through the trees, and the gleam of her golden hair made his eyes almost fierce for the moment.

"I am going to-morrow morning," he said bluntly, when he reached her where she sat in the shade of a mimosa.

She raised her eyes for a moment—deep velvet eyes with something in them that made his heart leap within his breast.

"And I love you, Estella," he added. "You may be offended—you may despise me—you may distrust me. But nothing can alter me. I love you—now and ever." She drew a deep breath and sat motionless.

"How many women does an Englishman love at once?" she asked coldly at length.

"Only one, señorita."

He stood looking at her for a moment. Then she rose and walked past him into the house.

But in spite of this unfortunate reception of Conyngham's proposal, there is, of course, a happy ending.

VII

Merriman's widow tells us that his next book, *Dross*, after being published as a serial in England, was issued in book form in 1899. But he had written it at a time when he was ill, and did not think it good enough, so he refused to publish it in England. He was a conscientious man, as we have seen in his drastic treatment of his early works, and invariably tried to give his best to his public. Mrs. Scott says that it dealt with the period of the Second Empire, and that the scenes were laid in Suffolk as well as in France; that it contained admirable descriptions of the scenery of the

Maritime Alps, and that a character, John Turner, an English banker, who comes into *The Last Hope*, appears in it.

The Isle of Unrest, which appeared in 1900, deals with the wilder and remoter parts of Corsica, and treats of the vendetta between two families in that island just before the Franco-Prussian War. A young French officer, with Corsican blood in his veins, is the hero, and there are some effective descriptions of his adventures, both in his lawless island home and during the war, when he is wounded at Sedan. Unsuspected reserves of gold in the mountains, disputed title-deeds, and a fortune-hunting French military engineer combine to make an exciting story of a rather conventional kind. It is difficult to quote from Merriman, but here is a description of the scenery through which de Vasselot rides in a wild race against time to find his demented old father, who has wandered away in the illusion that he is being pursued by his foes :

The rider now emerged into the open, and made his careful way along the face of a mountain. The chill air bespoke a great altitude, which was confirmed by that waiting, throbbing silence which is of the summits. Far down on the right, across rolling ranges of lower hills, a steady pin-point of light twinkled like a star. It was the lighthouse of Punta-Revellata, by Calvi, twenty miles away. The night was clear and dark. A few clouds lay on the horizon to the south, and all the dome of heaven was a glittering field of stars. . . . After Murato the track had descended sharply, only to mount again to the heights dividing the watersheds of the Bevinco and the Golo. And now de Vasselot could hear the Golo roaring in its rocky bed in the valley below. . . . The country here was more fertile, and the track led through the thickest macquis. The subtle scent of flowering bushes filled the air with a cool, soft flavour, almost to be tasted on the lips, of arbutus, myrtle, cistus, oleander, tamarisk and a score of flowering heaths. The silence here was broken incessantly by the stirring of the birds, which swarm in these berry-bearing coppices.

Space forbids the detailed consideration of Merriman's remaining three books, excluding the posthumous *Last Hope*, to which I have previously referred, and which deals with the period of the Second Empire. But enough has been said at some length before to illustrate his method, his plots and his general characteristics, which I will sum up briefly before I conclude. *The Velvet Glove* is placed in Spain, and is an exciting story for those who are interested in heiresses immured in convents and rescued therefrom by chivalrous and unselfish lovers. This book shows Merriman's anti-clericalism at its most rampant ; but apart from the conventional cloister melodrama, it is interesting on account of the characters of the two Sarriens, father and son, who are very well-drawn and attractively presented. *The Vultures* concerns itself with the abortive rising in Poland after the assassination of Alexander II in 1881, and introduces the English diplomatist, Cartoner, who is mentioned in other novels, and appears in several of the short stories. He, again, is a character that lives, as is also the French Foreign Office expert, his friend, Paul Deulin. *Barlasch of the Guard*, the last novel to be published in its author's lifetime, was his favourite book. It deals with Dantzig and Borodino, and is a very successful attempt

at historical presentation. Its hero is one of Napoleon's Old Guard, a very engaging character, who introduces himself to the hostess of his billets in Dantzic as "Barlasch of the Guard. Once a sergeant. Italy, Egypt, the Danube. Papa Barlasch."

VIII

We may now try to arrive at a general estimate of Merriman's merits as an author. We have observed his care for detail and accuracy in his local colour, his industry, and his desire always to give of his best as he knew it. He travelled through strange countries, not as one thinking how queer they are, and how different, unfavourably so, from England, as so many of our countrymen do, but as an intelligent observer, seeking to find and retain an impression of the spirit of the lands and their peoples, interested, and not amused, by their customs, traditions and characteristics, and impelled by a real desire to know and understand them, rather in the spirit of Terence's *homo sum; humani nihil a me alienum puto*. He has the power of making the scenes he is describing live before us, and he gets the atmosphere of the country with which he is dealing very convincingly. His conversations are fluent, easy and natural, and suited to his characters—a rarer gift, this, in fiction than some would suppose. He has a distinct gift for epigram and aphorism; here are a few specimens taken at random:

She was just at that age when she did not look it.

Many are so busy shouting "Advance!" that they have no breath to ask whither they are going.

In a multitude of counsellors there may be safety, but it is assuredly only the counsellors who are safe.

A smile is frequently misconstrued by the simple-hearted into the outward sign of inward kindness.

A low origin is like an hereditary disease—it will bear no strain.

The man who manages his neighbours' affairs mismanages his own.

Selection is difficult, but examples can be found on almost every page, and I commend him as a subject for research to the calendar-compilers.

Characterisation is his weak point. I have commented more than once on his strong, silent men, and his women are worse—usually too impossibly good or bad for human nature's daily food, or even for occasional banquets. And he has a habit of contrasting the good and the bad, the silent and the loquacious, the earnest and the frivolous in book after book in a way which becomes monotonous. But he can sometimes portray a character which has an originality and a power of its own: he can, in fact, sometimes create a puppet which lives and moves and has being, and so ceases to be a puppet.

But with all his faults, he could tell a story, and he knew what he was talking about. And above all it cannot be too much emphasised that he was a careful, industrious and conscientious worker—homely gifts, perhaps, but frequently missing in authors; and although we cannot call him a great writer, we can at least give him a high place among the capable novelists of his kind of the last century.

CORRESPONDENCE

THE CHISWICK PRESS

(To the Editor of THE LONDON MERCURY)

SIR,—I was interested reading in the June number of *THE LONDON MERCURY* Mr. Newdigate's notes on the Chiswick Press, and in particular his reference to some of its type-faces.

Actually, *Lady Willoughby's Diary*, in which Charles Whittingham revived the Caslon's old face type, was "imprinted for Longman, Brown, Green & Longmans," and not for William Pickering, in whose *Juvenalis Satira*, but for delays, the Caslon would have made its bow. It is a pity that the diary should thus have taken to itself such fame, when all credit for the revival of to-day's most popular type-face should be shared by Whittingham the typographer and Pickering the publisher.

Indirectly, is it not true to say that the popular modern lay-out of title-page and book is based on the practice of the Chiswick Press during the nineteenth century from about 1840 onwards, first under Whittingham, then Jacobi—perhaps especially in the books printed for William Pickering and Basil Montague Pickering? In spite of the homage still paid to books produced by William Morris in the Golden, Troy and Chaucer types, they have had no apparent influence on the modern Renaissance in popular book-production.

It is interesting to hear from Mr. Jacobi the history-in-brief of the Revised Old Style No. 4 type. Another Chiswick Press fount is the Antique, also cut by Miller & Richards, probably about 1900. This type very closely resembles the Golden type of Morris, though the up and down strokes in the Antique are shorter, the serifs different, and the y more like that usual in calligraphy. I wonder whether Miller & Richards have any record of when this type was *designed*, before or after the introduction of the Golden?

Yours, etc.,

5 Victoria Road, W.8.

C. SANDFORD.

OSCAR WILDE

(To the Editor of THE LONDON MERCURY)

SIR,—I am engaged in writing a life, and editing the letters, of Oscar Wilde; and I shall be grateful if any of your readers who have information to contribute, or letters which I may be privileged to read, will inform me.—Yours, etc.,

A. J. A. SYMONS.

1 Bedford Square, W.C.1.

SIR THOMAS BROWNE

(To the Editor of THE LONDON MERCURY)

SIR,—There are in existence copies of the first edition (1658) of Sir Thomas Browne's *Hydriotaphia* and *The Garden of Cyms* bearing corrections in contemporary MS.; and since, in 3 cases at least, this is almost certainly the hand of the author, such copies are of importance to an editor. I am engaged on a new edition of the two works, and I should be very grateful for news of any such copies, whether in libraries (other than Trinity College, Cambridge and McGill University) or in private hands.—Yours, etc.,

JOHN CARTER.

5, Peel Street, W.8.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTES & NEWS

Correspondence from readers on all subjects of bibliographical interests is invited. Our Correspondent will, to the best of his ability, answer all queries addressed to him.

GENERAL NOTES

A BIBLIOGRAPHY of W. S. Gilbert is a thing which should give pleasure to a very large number of people, and which, moreover, offers a guide to a very complicated and hitherto uncharted piece of country. Such a book is *Sir William Schwenck Gilbert, a Bibliographical Adventure*, compiled by Mr. Townley Searle, and published by the author at 30, Gerrard Street, London, W.I. (The ordinary edition consists of 270 copies at £3 3s. each.) Here we have a most interesting description of a long and prolific literary career, which must have been very difficult to elucidate, and about which there are still probably things to be discovered—in spite of the 109 items of which the main section of Mr. Searle's bibliography consists. Not all these 109 were actually published, for Mr. Searle includes (among other things) particulars of certain unprinted plays of which he unearthed (or perhaps undusted is the more correct word) the manuscripts in the vaults of the Lord Chamberlain at St. James's Palace. Of the works of Gilbert, which were published more or less in book form, a great many present all sorts of difficulties (apart from their often great rarity) to the collector—and, indeed, the necessity of having to carry so many details and "points" in one's mind is the solitary objection that I can see to becoming an impassioned Gilbert collector merely as a result of dipping into this bibliography. How complicated—and also how generally unknown—a story is that of Gilbert's publications is to be seen from Mr. Searle's statement that only two copies of Gilbert *libretti* have ever been offered as separate items in the London auction rooms, and that neither of these was, in fact, what it was supposed to be, a first edition. This bibliography should go far to preventing such mistakes in future, and also towards bringing to light many interesting books that would otherwise pass unnoticed. As I have often said before, the only real test of a bibliography is constant use, and this the reviewer is never in a position to apply before writing his review. It is extremely difficult, therefore, to pass any valuable judgment on a book of this kind, except to say that, from a general inspection, it appears to be a sound piece of work—and is obviously the production of an enthusiast for his subject. Mr. Searle has, however, been a little unfair to his own book (though I know from experience how difficult misprints are to avoid) in letting pass two obvious "literals" in his very first entry—and on p. 5 I notice that three lines of the text of the introduction are misplaced. Finally, I must add that Mr. Searle announces that he is to publish, from the manuscript which is in his possession, an edition of a hitherto unprinted play by Gilbert called *A Colossal Idea*. This is good news.

FROM the Ulysses Bookshop, 20 Bury Street, W.C., I have received a copy of *1,100 Obscure Points: The Bibliographies of 25 English and 21 American Authors*, by Dr. Jacob Schwartz. The price is sixteen shillings, and there is no doubt that the author supplies a tremendous amount of information for this sum. I am, however, a little doubtful whether he has not attempted to compress too much into the ninety-five closely printed pages of his text, so that the book's utility is impaired. Moreover, not all the entries contain the same kind of information. Here I refer particularly to the matter of bindings. Take, for example, Mrs. Browning. *Aurora Leigh* is described as having "Dark Green Cloth. Gilt lettered on the back"; but of the binding of the

preceding item, *Casa Guidi Windows*, we are only told that it is "blind-stamped cloth" without any note of the colour—and this inconsistency is repeated again and again in many of the bibliographies. Furthermore, I do not think that the descriptions of the bindings are by any means always correct. Mrs. Browning's *The Seraphim* is described as in "Claret-coloured boards," whereas my copy (and I fancy this is usual) is in claret-coloured cloth. Swinburne's *A Song of Italy* is described as having "Bright blue cloth," whereas it is generally accepted that though this is the commoner binding of this book, the earlier and more desirable binding is green cloth. Wordsworth's *Sonnets* are given as in "Dark green cloth"—which may be correct sometimes (I am not sure of this point), but the book certainly also is to be found in dull purplish cloth, which (since Dr. Schwartz's is supposedly a book of "points") was surely worth mentioning. There is more than one binding, too, of *The Prelude*. The truth is, of course, that these Victorian bindings are immensely variable, and present innumerable problems that are by no means always easily solved; and that any attempt to deal with them wholesale, in a word or two each, is bound to be misleading. Finally, Dr. Schwartz has obviously written parts of his preliminary matter very hastily—otherwise he would hardly allow himself to speak (on p. ix) of "Shelley's *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*," or to give (on p. x) 1632 as the date of the first folio of Shakespeare; and uncorrected slips such as these certainly do something to shake one's faith in the book's general accuracy. I am sorry to have to write so grudgingly of this book, which must have entailed great labour in its compilation, and of which the author has been kind enough to send me a pleasantly inscribed copy. But really I can do no other, for the book certainly falls a long way below the level which Dr. Schwartz reached in the A. E. Coppard bibliography which I recently had cause to praise in these notes.

YET another part (the second of volume 28) of *Book-Auction Records* has reached me from Messrs. Henry Stevens, Son & Stiles, of 39, Great Russell Street, W.C.1. It contains nearly four thousand records of books sold between January and March of this year in London and Edinburgh. The sale of the library of Mr. G. E. Cooke-Yarborough, held at Doncaster on February 11th-13th, is also included. As most readers of these notes already know, *B.A.R.* is an invaluable friend to anyone who either collects, or deals in, old books. The subscription is thirty shillings a year.

NOTES ON SALES

THE second portion of the library of the late G. Thorn-Drury, K.C., was sold at Messrs. Sotheby's on June 15th and 16th, when a sum of £2,315 16s. was realised, bringing the total so far fetched by this collection to over £5,700. The following were some of the chief lots and their prices:—John Gamble, *Ayres and Dialogues*, folio, 1656, bound together with John Playfair's *Select Ayres and Dialogues*, 1659, and the three books of H. Lawes's *Ayres and Dialogues*, 1653-5-8, £70; Thomas Stanley, *Poems and Translations*, 8vo., 1647, £25, and *Poems*, 8vo., 1651, £29; J. Tatham, *The Fancies Theatre*, 8vo., 1640, £30; Matthew Coppinger, *Poems, Songs and Love-Verses*, 8vo., 1682, £23; W. Shakespeare, *The Tempest*, adapted by Dryden and Davenant, first issue, quarto, 1670, £20, and a second issue of the same, £15; and E. Waller, *Poems*, 8vo., 1645, the edition having the imprint, "I.N. for Hu. Mosley," £31. Some of the books had amusing titles. Such were Thomas Stirry's *A Rot among the Bishops, or, a Terrible Tempest in the Sea of Canterbury, set forth in lively Emblems to please the judicious Reader*, 8vo., 1641, £18, and Samuel Austin's *Naps upon Parnassas. A sleepy Muse nipt and pincht, though not awakened*, 8vo., 1658, £9; both these works are in verse.

ITEMS FROM THE BOOKSHOPS AND CATALOGUES

BOOKS of eighteenth-century verse have always appealed to me, personally, more than any others. Therefore I welcome especially a list which has just reached me from Mr. Greville Worthington, who now owns what was once Baker's Bookshop, at 14-16, John Bright Street, Birmingham. This list consists of the first half of a very attractive eighteenth-century library, formed by a well-known collector (I fancy I can guess who he is) and consisting largely of poetry. Most of the books are comparatively inexpensive, and many attractive minor authors are represented, among whom are Christopher Anstey, I. H. Browne, Elizabeth Carter, J. Byrom, Charles Churchill, W. Combe, Stephen Duck, Francis Fawkes, Richard Graves, Walter Harte, and George Huddesford. Among more important writers are Addison, Burke, Gray and Goldsmith. By far the most expensive book offered is, I think, Goldsmith's *Essays*, first edition, 1765, "a very fine copy," for which £24 is asked.

I HAVE had a good deal of pleasure and amusement out of perusing catalogue 35 of Messrs. Birrell and Garnett, Ltd., of 30 Gerrard Street, London, W.1. The title of this list is *Popular Woodcuts* of the 18th and 19th centuries. Some seventy-five chapbooks, broadsides and small popular illustrated volumes are offered—and I can imagine the astonishment of some of the authors and publishers could they see their wares thus elaborately described and marked (sometimes) at two or three guineas a volume. Among the wood-cuts contained in these books are many that are only quaint or curious, but there are also some by first-rate craftsmen such as the Bewicks, Luke Clennell and Charlton Nesbit. The catalogue, though a small one, contains a good many reproductions, and is therefore itself an entertaining performance. I am not sure that some of the Bewick items are not really out of place in this list, as being goods of too high an intention and class; but the minor items are delightfully unexpected things to find solemnly set out in a West End bookseller's list—and they are clearly extremely attractive and (I imagine) saleable, supposing that anybody has any money to spend on whimsies just now.

I. A. WILLIAMS

BOOK-PRODUCTION NOTES

JOHN BELL'S TYPES.*

WE OWE this chapter in the history of English printing to Mr. Morison's happy discovery at the Bibliothèque Nationale of a unique *Specimen of the first set of types . . . completed under the direction of John Bell*. Mr. Morison recognized in the specimen a type-face of provenance hitherto unknown, used by Bulmer in England, by Colerick, Hunter and Beaumont at Philadelphia in 1795, and revived by Mr. Bruce Rogers just a hundred years later. Mr. Updike made an independent discovery of it in England, and used it for *The Wedding Journey of Charles & Martha Babcock Amory*, printed at the Merrymount Press in 1922. He shows a specimen of it in his *Printing Types*, II, page 243, ranking it in that large and interesting class of types transitional between old style founts and modern face characters, shown in late eighteenth-century English and French specimen-books—the types like Martin's in England or Didot's early founts in France . . .

and in the same chapter "On the Choice of Types" he specially commends "such a fine transitional letter" for the reason that it

will do all the work of an old style type, and has sometimes . . . a distinction and delicacy which old style founts do not possess; while it is . . . less bleak and commonplace than a modern faced type.

Subsequently, Mr. Morison begged Mr. Robert Blake, director of the Sheffield firm of Stephenson & Blake, to search through "the unique collection of historic English typographical material" in the possession of their firm. As the fruit of the search the Cambridge University Press has come into possession of a fount of Bell's type, from which this monograph has been printed. With the newly cast type Mr. Morison has also been able to give us an accurate type-facsimile of Bell's own specimens. Bell established his "British Letter Foundry" in 1788. In an announcement of Arthur Murphy's *The Way to Keep Him* he gives expression to his aims and aspirations:

J. Bell flatters himself that he will be able to render this THE MOST PERFECT and in every respect the MOST BEAUTIFUL book, that ever was printed in any country.

He presumes to promise this excellence from a confidence in the Supremacy of HIS LETTER FOUNDRY which he is now establishing at his own premises and under his own direction. He is at present casting a NEW TYPE for the purpose on improved principles . . . The ink will be prepared by himself.

His punch-cutter was Richard Austin, whose subsequent career and important place in the history of English type-founding are to be told by Mr. Morison in another volume.

THE GLASGOW UNIVERSITY PRESS.†

THE pre-eminent names in this account of the Glasgow University Press, written by its present managing director, are, of course, those of Robert and Andrew Foulis. Andrew was apprenticed to the trade of a barber. During the ten or eleven years in which he earned his living as a master-barber, he gave all his spare time to study, attending Hutcheson's lectures in philosophy at the University and also reading

**John Bell, 1745-1831. Bookseller, Printer, Publisher, Type founder, Journalist, etc.* By Stanley Morison. Cambridge University Press. Large 8vo. 300 copies for sale. 63s.

†*The Glasgow University Press 1638-1931*; with some notes on Scottish printing in the last three hundred years. By James MacLehose. 8vo. Glasgow: at the University Press.

assiduously the Greek and Latin classics. From an account of the brothers written about 1775 we learn that

When they were at the University of Oxford, they were shown . . . a manuscript of Æsop's fables said to be the manuscript copied by Robert Stevens [Estienne] as a model of his types. . . . It occur'd to them if he imitated a manuscript for the form of his types, his editions might serve as models in reviving them.

In 1741 Robert's love for books led him to take up bookselling, publishing and printing, and in 1743 he was appointed University printer. His press was then set up within the walls of the College, to be moved a few years later to bigger premises in the city.

Always he aimed at having as perfect a text as possible, presented in beautiful form and of a convenient and economical size. He depended little on illustrations, and a great deal on the shape and proportion of his pages. He was careful also about the quality and size of his paper, and the ingredients of the ink used.

The famous Greek types used by Foulis, like his roman founts, were cut and cast by Alexander Wilson, who began typesetting in the same year, 1741, in which Foulis began printing. Foulis gave up the use of the contractions which make early Greek printing so difficult to the untrained modern eye, although Wilson himself thought that they should be retained.

The first of the MacLehose family to be appointed University Printer was Robert, son of James MacLehose, who began business as a bookseller at Glasgow in 1838. Robert became University Printer in 1872. He retired in 1894, and his Press was sold to his two nephews, Robert and James, the younger of whom is the present managing director and the author of this highly interesting record. It is excellently printed in 13-point Poliphilus with well-proportioned margins. The contents of each page are summarized in the outer margins in the old way—a method of decorating the page which is of great help to the reader. Both in its record and in its production the book makes it plain that the present directors of the MacLehose Press, like its founders, are imbued with the ideals which prompted Robert Foulis. . . . In the modern revival of interest in typographical quality the firm has endeavoured, not without some measure of success, to take its share in upholding the reputation of Scottish and also of British printing.

THE CHISWICK PRESS

MR. JACOBI kindly corrects some errors made in my note on the Chiswick Press in the June number of THE LONDON MERCURY. Miller and Richards' was the first of the so-called Old Style faces, not, of course, the first of the Old Faces. What Mr. Jacobi believes to be the first specimen of the face, complete from great primer down to pearl, is a torn and tattered pamphlet of 1860. The Gills, father and son, were managers successively of Miller and Richards' London branch, not partners in the firm. It was to Longmans, and not to Pickering, that *Lady Willoughby's Diary* was invoiced on the 1st of April, 1844. Messrs. C. Whittingham and Griggs, Ltd., acquired the Press in 1919. Mr. Jacobi remained with it three years more as consulting director.

THE new issue of the *Gutenberg Jahrbuch* has, as in former years, a number of valuable studies on the origin and early history of printing. I hope to summarize them in the next number of THE LONDON MERCURY. There are also articles in English by Mr. Victor Scholderer (on Stephanus Corallus, a little-known printer of Lyons), Mr. A. F. Johnson ("Italic Type in the Eighteenth Century"), and Mr. Hubert Foss ("The Printing of Music").

B. H. NEWDIGATE

CHRONICLES

THE BALLET

FOR years one had heard of Ida Rubinstein. One was told of her lovely poses, of her friendship with d'Annunzio ; that she had never visited London. And suddenly it was announced that she had been secured by the Covent Garden Syndicate for a fortnight's season : she was to bring her own troupe, instructed by Nijinska and Massine ; her own scenery, painted by Bakst, Benois and Golovin ; her own play, written for her by d'Annunzio, and finally she was bringing M. Ravel to conduct his own most popular compositions, *Boléro* and *La Valse*. How, one wondered, would Covent Garden adapt its scenic arrangements, its lighting and its creaking boards ?

On the first night by a miracle these foreseen difficulties were overcome : Bakst scenery unfolded its pride like a peacock ; the boards did not creak, the lighting shed its fickle vagaries : there was, however, one sad fault to record ; the *première danseuse* herself was a failure. Mme. Rubinstein triumphed as a *poseuse*, a *mimeuse*, even as a *diseuse* ; as a *danseuse* she became almost ridiculous.

Signor d'Annunzio's play is, may one say, hopelessly dated : were it not for the scenery, the music, and the great French tradition of conventional acting, to have listened to it would have been more of a privilege than a pleasure. The scenery with its Bakst-blue skies and its gorgeous costumes set in beautifully formalised frames was a real joy : Debussy's music from that strange period when he decided to knock away the props of easily enjoyable sound and leave his invention in stark economy was beautiful, interesting and almost ultra-modern : the high sopranos in unison came in almost more as a noise in the head than a musical effect ; the prelude to the second act was sheer beauty. The experiment of harnessing the pagans Bakst and Debussy to a Christian theme of martyrdom was justified. The declamation in its studied inflexions was a joy to hear. Mme. Rubinstein's poses were satisfying to the eye : but in her dancing and in the languid masochism of her scene in Apollo's grove, one could see provocation for nothing but boredom. D'Annunzio's words, though grateful to declaim, are too many and the drama too long drawn out. Even so one would not have missed it. *Saint Sébastien* was, however, only one performance. Since then there have been *Boléro* and *La Valse*.

Ever since I first heard *Boléro* it has been a puzzle to me to know how a choreographer could deal with the musical form. Mme. Nijinska has produced a triumph of choreography ; M. Benois a triumph of scenic design ; M. Ravel's music, commissioned by Mme. Rubinstein, has become a first favourite with the public.

Thus a first-rate new ballet has been produced, which was exceedingly well performed by all but the central figure, who indeed received considerable expressions of disapprobation at the close of the performance. One would have thought it almost impossible for a Latin woman to dance so languidly, surrounded by the growing excitement of some forty men eagerly watching her dance on the huge table in the centre of the stage and themselves joining more and more frantically in the movement. One would never be deprived of the pleasure of watching M. Ravel conduct : but one must faithfully record that he secured an indifferent performance of the music.

The scenery of *La Valse* by M. Maurice Besses is a revelation of Paris Opera House—Waterloo Ball style. Even an English audience was moved to applaud as the curtain went up. The music, though a parody of Viennese waltz style, is sheer beauty and a masterpiece of orchestration. M. Ravel when he wrote it provided a scenario which Mme. Nijinska has carried out with amazing virtuosity. The only blot, again, was Mme. Rubinstein both in her dancing and in her absurd dress, which might almost have spoilt the picture. Both Mme. Nijinska and M. Ravel received a richly deserved ovation. If M. Ravel conducts much more in England one can almost see him usurping Sir James Barrie's popularity. His sense of wit, form, and beauty and his love of craftsmanship and style are at last being recognized in their irresistible appeal. And he has a most endearing appearance.

The music of *David* is frankly horrible. One can admire M. Sauguet's obviously sincere attempt to make use of the early Italian style of Monteverde and his contemporaries, which he sprays with completely meaningless "modern" harmonies to bring them up to date. His true invention lies in light Rossinesque melodies of which we had a touch now and then. For this he has a real genius. Considering how "cheap" is his music to *La Chatte*, it astonishes one by its wearing qualities. The scenery was an attempt by M. Benois to blend the styles of Botticelli and Piero della Francesca for the costumes and Perugino for the scene. It was M. Massine's almost hopeless task to adapt his choregraphy to these conflicting elements. To do him justice he almost succeeded: but he could not prevent some of the movements from seeming slightly ridiculous. He quite rightly adopted the formalised poses that the Italian Renaissance artists made use of in their designs. He almost solved the problem of the transitions from one formal attitude to another.

La Princesse Cygne extracted from Rimsky-Korsakov's *Czar Sultan* is a real Russian fairy-tale: the swan shot at by a stranded prince becomes a princess; the prince sleeps, and wakes to find himself in an enchanted city where he is royally received, crowned and finds his Swan-Princess to seek his hand in a typical Russian wedding. M. Benois' scenery, particularly of the Russian City (not unlike Gontcharova's in the *Firebird*) is extraordinarily effective. The costumes were beautifully invented and the choregraphy charming in the traditional Russian style. The *Corps de Ballet* so obviously enjoyed their Russian dances that to watch it was a great pleasure. Mme. Rubinstein's toe-dancing and her famous arm-undulations were singularly beautifully displayed.

Nocturne is a curious attempt to fit a Spanish scenario to music by Borodin, extraordinarily ably orchestrated, with the help of chorus-passages, by Tcherepnin. Broadly speaking, it is very successful: but Mme. Rubinstein's unsuccessful efforts at flying (with considerable assistance from M. Wiltzak) seem unduly protracted. We had some very able Spanish dancing from M. Lapitsky who shows very great promise and should be given more chance. M. Wiltzak's dancing has been somewhat of a disappointment: he is sadly overworked as a prop for Mme. Rubinstein.

One must render grateful thanks to Mme. Rubinstein for providing us with such splendid spectacles: and for her enterprise in commissioning M. Ravel to write *Boléro* and then bringing him over here to conduct for us. Can she not rest occasionally on her well-earned laurels and provide for us some female solo dancers to assist her in some of the Ballets less well suited to her lovely posing?

VERE PILKINGTON

MOVIES AND TALKIES

RANGO. SCHOEDSACK. Paramount. Plaza.

DISHONOURED. VON STERNBERG. Paramount. Carlton.

THERE are only two films to be taken seriously this month. They are both of a kind that may make that statement disputed ; their real quality may be easily lost because *Rango* may be taken as an "animal-interest" film and *Dishonoured* a spy picture lacking the traditional essentials of its type. But they are both an escape from standardisation, and I enjoyed them. If one is sure of one's taste, one needs no other criterion. The heroes of *Rango* are two orang-outangs, the heroine of *Dishonoured* is a cat. It is true Marlene Dietrich is the star of *Dishonoured*, but all the fascination, wisdom and quiet strangeness she exudes is as it were the circumference flowing round that centre of the cat. It looks at you to show it knows this, then shuts its eyes.

The orang-outangs look, too. But never at you. Though it cannot help being a *tour-de-force*, *Rango* seems made without audience consciousness. The close-ups of the oranges show us something far beyond their faces as they sit thinking—and they do not think of us at all. They are thinking of man, and why he is so like them and yet does such different things—such as live in a permanent home, which he locks up when he leaves it. Man is more like an orang than any other animal, yet his ways differ more deeply. So Tua sits with Rango, his son, in Sumatran tree-tops, trying to work out this problem, and when the hunter and his son are out after tiger, the villain of jungles, Tua and Rango break into his hut. According to scenario, this is sheer ape-curiosity. But one close-up convinces you that it is really desire to learn about this other upright creature who helps them by fighting the tiger. Once in the hut, orang-nature asserts itself. Tua and Rango have never seen so much food before. It does not have to be fought for ; it is stored up, to be eaten when wanted. The oranges want it that moment ; they have a royal and riotous feast on raw eggs, and leave plenty of clues. So it happens that when the hunters return, Rango is soon captured. Tua sits disconsolate in his tree, trying fiercely not to forget to remember where his son is.

The hunter goes off again, leaving his son to look after the hut. The son shares his evening meal with Rango, who creeps under his rug. Outside, Tua sits in his tree, and the hunter, who does not have to climb trees to be safe, sleeps by a fire. Outside, also, the tiger roams, and a million monkey-eyes peer through the dark, and a hundred monkey-mothers cover their young with their hands. The tiger reaches the hut, destroys the hen coop. The son fires and flies after him. Tua seizes the chance to rescue Rango. But instead of the boy chasing the tiger, the tiger chases boy and oranges. Both orang and man are at one in their flight—but man has a little stronger defence. The boy turns a buffalo out at the tiger, which is killed after a furious fight. But he has killed Rango first, and Tua is again left alone in the trees.

There are fewer spectacular scenes than in other of Schoedsack's films, but I liked it far better. Its great strength is its directness. Man, tiger and orang-outang provide the conflict of the film, but all of the jungle lives in it. *Rango* is not without tricks—it seemed to me that at least two oranges played the part of Tua—but it has an unforgettable beauty, both in approach to its subject and in photography. But it is no good to you if you do not like oranges, for it gets nearer to them than any film yet made.

The cat in *Dishonoured* is a very subtle hieroglyph, in a film that is all hieroglyphs. That is why, despite its having the screen's newest and what they call "most

glamorous," star, as well as a notorious spy for its theme, it is possible for it to seem either a very dull or a very exciting and important film. Its scenario is based on the life of Mata Hari, the most famous spy-courtesan of the war. But the film Von Sternberg has made has little movement or melodrama; it is very slow and has a quite disproportionate amount of space given to a ball in Vienna. I would not be without it, for it has a most lovely putting into visual image of the *Blue Danube*, but it goes on too long for the action involved. From the box-office point of view, in fact, Von Sternberg has not taken account of the action—which is one of the exciting things about *Dishonoured*. He is more concerned with the consequences. Mata Hari was a spy, he says in effect, very well—this is what resulted from that. So when she lets her lover, an enemy spy, escape, we do not see how he escapes; we cut to her trial that resulted. Instead of literal action, he gives us result and effect—which is so rare in the commercial cinema that I for one forgave Baccardi cocktails in a 1916 Vienna, a secret service that sent out orders in everyday type and a spy who left them in her coat pocket for gentlemen who climbed in dry from wet windows to take. She loves a cat, and because she takes it with her when she is dropped over the Russian frontier from a plane, her Russian lover tracks her. Spies should not travel with clues, of course; even in films this seems foolish . . . but Mata Hari herself committed astonishing blunders, and if one considers this cat as Von Sternberg's symbol for Siva, I think one has a clue to his method. Mata Hari professed a cult of Siva. It gave her foundation for her orgies and put men in her power. When one looks at the Dietrich cat, one thinks of the eye of Siva—I should not be surprised if Von Sternberg, not wishing to be bothered with Siva, substituted that cat and went on with the consequences. It is the sort of irritating but successful thing he would do. Similar translation makes Dietrich play *Donauwellen* instead of being a dancer.

There are thus three strands in *Dishonoured*—the cat, the music and Dietrich. It is worth noticing how the cat is introduced into the film, and just when the waltz is played. Dietrich herself has never been better. She does extraordinarily difficult things with great ease, and makes an easy thing, such as walking across a room, seem beyond anyone else. Her walk, her voice and all that is behind a lift of her eyebrows make her beauty weave deeply into the strands of the mind—and then because Von Sternberg likes misleading us with box-office angles and putting out at its full length the tongue he has kept so much in his cheek, the camera flirts mischievously with her legs. There are two moments—when she discusses champagne with a butler, and when she begs for an interview with the miscast McLaglen—when she gives hint of a less languid Dietrich than her director has troubled to bring out. His trick of making her pause twice in every sentence is further evidence of stunting her for effect. This will have to be looked to, for neither of her American films is an "audience-picture," and if they do not succeed, Paramount will send her back, as a failure to draw the public, instead of realising the fault lies in their own story department, which never knew what to do with Bébé Daniels or Menjou, and has given a most incompetent story to Bankhead.

But nearly all the stories of most recent films are incompetent. It seems that the stars are desperately keen to show that they can do what any other can do. Thus we have Ruth Chatterton in *The Right To Love*, though Marlene Dietrich is much more peasant than the Lady from Broadway, and it is becoming increasingly difficult to distinguish between any of the films put out by Metro-Goldwyn. I have a suspicion that Crawford has the rôles Garbo turns down, and that Garbo with a husky shrug says, "I tink I do it after all," when Shearer refuses a part as not grand enough. How else can we explain Garbo masquerading as "Yvonne, the toast of Paris," while

Shearer, in *Strangers May Kiss*, swept, in jet Juliet caps, in and out of foreign resorts whose ways she did not understand in the least? Metro-Goldwyn are rich in feminine stars, but they seem unable to choose the right vehicles, and the first rule of the movies is that if there is no reason why one star more than another should appear in a picture, that star is going to lose favour. Personality is all most of them have and if that is not tended, they have nothing to show. They merely cancel each other out—and leave the old stars to give them a lesson.

Both Mary Pickford and Gloria Swanson have lately made films which are quite meaningless, but at least it is quite definite that none but they could have done them. Pickford's qualification for *Kiki* are beyond me, but I think the secret of Swanson may be defined as sheer businesslike savvy. Her voice has no charm, she is not a rival of Helen of Troy, but she knows how to keep in the centre of her picture. She works hard and she seems to enjoy it, and so while one sees it, *Indiscreet* seems a pleasant picture, when a moment's reflection shows it is quite empty. *Kiki*, on the other hand, seemed to be a lot of noise about nothing until afterwards—then I could not believe that I really had seen such an extraordinary sequence of events as Mary Pickford dressed as a boy, with her trousers descending; Mary Pickford turning somersaults round a man's bedroom; Mary Pickford staging an undressing act, and Mary Pickford found in a man's bed in pyjamas. But it is true; with a French accent and a giggle as trying as Shearer's, she plunges the World's Sweetheart into the ranks of the chorus and, in a gallant if misplaced attempt to show the Dietrichs and Bankheads who owns the movies, she crams more mascara on her eyes than Theda Bara ever dreamt of and waves an "Adult" certificate. *Kiki* is a remarkable joke on all feminine stars, including the one who made it.

Other films of some interest are *Quick Millions*, a racketeering drama of excellent speed; *Dude Ranch*, and Dorothy Arzner's *Honour Among Lovers*. *The Royal Family of Broadway* is a pleasant satire on the Barrymore family and Metro-Goldwyn, saving money by using sets twice, have turned out a burlesque of *The Big House* as Laurel and Hardy's first long film. It manages to be as funny as their shorts, and it is amusing to see how the down-trodden, humble Laurel more and more becomes the real leader of the team, Hardy being his real self as dowager chaperon. But the best of all comedies is Buster Keaton's *Romeo in Pyjamas*: it amused me so much that gratitude prevents me from arguing about it. There it is. With *Rango* and *Dishonoured* it is something to be grateful for and worth exploring one's self.

ROBERT HERRING

FICTION—I

ALL PASSION SPENT. By V. SACKVILLE-WEST. Hogarth Press. 7s. 6d.

EBENEZER WALKS WITH GOD. By GEORGE BAKER. Scholartis Press. 7s. 6d.

SLAVES. By FRANK POLLARD. Grant Richards. 7s. 6d.

PRISONERS UNDER THE SUN. By NORBERT BAUER. Peter Davies. 7s. 6d.

A BOOK full of great beauty, that adds dignity to its author's reputation, has been written by Miss Sackville-West. It comes under the heading of "Fiction," but it is not as a novel that one perceives its value so much as an epic of old age. Miss Sackville West's method of approach, here, is like her poem on the land "It is the land I sing," she wrote at the beginning of that lovely work, and if this book had been written in verse not prose, "It is the old I sing," might equally have been its preface. There is very little dealing in it with the characters at grips with their personal problems—pains, sensations and inner struggles—as is the way of a novel; we simply see, passing before us, the picture of an old woman of eighty-eight emerging from the long chrysalis stage of marriage, sloughing the cocoon of children and grand-children and great-grandchildren, in which she has been shrouded, and developing into an independent serenity of her own. But it is all picture and word painting; no probe is used to get beneath the surface, no anxious quickening of the heart is called for. One looks on as one looks at Nicolaa's Maas's picture of an old woman saying grace before supper—sympathetic, but unquestioning.

Miss Sackville-West's reply may lie in the title of her book. True: but is all suffering, all anxiety, ever done? Passion may die; but the capacity to feel ceases only with death. Nor will the reader doubt that old Lady Slane does feel—any more than one doubts the feeling of Maas's old lady.—only one is not shown them. The story, such as it is, is of Lady Slane, wife of an ex-Viceroy of India and prominent public man, who, when her husband dies at the age of ninety four, finds herself at eighty-eight free for the first time since she married, as a girl of seventeen, and thus, released at last, instantly knows what she must do. She resists her family's wishes, admits of no further ties, and begins to live alone, to herself. Whether such sudden firmness is consonant with the yielding disposition she has displayed for seventy odd years we are not to consider; it happens so. The dispositions that brought it about are not our concern; we have only to watch the picture disclosed. And it is the poet in Miss Sackville-West that describes it to us in a picture so full of charm and fine drawing that we are held at gaze to the end. It may seem unlikely to us that a woman, like this one, should come to feel such a complete indifference to the offspring of her womb; we may think that surely such a sweet character would have unavoidably reacted upon her family to bring it more into tune with herself? But we are not required to go into these recondities. All we are asked to look back at is the young girl who, from dreaming of devoting her life to art, passed, with the passage of a kiss,

into the sphere where people marry, beget and bear children, bring them up, give orders to servants, pay income-tax, understand about dividends, speak mysteriously in the presence of the young, take decisions for themselves, eat what they like, and go to bed at the hour which pleases them. Mr. Holland was asking her to accompany him into that sphere. He was asking her to be his wife.

Lady Slane did her duty in that state of life till her great-grandchildren were numbered around her, then yielded it all without a pang when Henry—bestower of that consequential kiss—ceased to be with her in her long sojourn upon earth :

Those days were gone when feeling burst its bounds and poured hot from the foundry, when the heart seemed likely to split with complex and contradictory desires. . . . For the rest she had been a lonely old woman, always at variance with the creeds to which she apparently conformed. . . . But she could look back on a girl walking beside a lake, as who should catch a petal in the act of unfolding ; dewy, wavering, virginal, eager, blown by generous yet shy impulses, as timid as a leveret and as swift, as confiding as a doe peeping between the tree trunks, as light-foot as a dancer waiting in the wings, as soft and scented as a damask rose, as full of laughter as a fountain—yes, that was youth, hesitant as one upon a threshold, yet ready to run her breast against a spear.

But she agrees to marrying Henry even, although :

she could see therein no reason for foregoing the whole of her own separate existence. Henry was in love with her, but no one proposed that he should forego his. On the contrary, it appeared that in acquiring her he was merely adding something extra to it.

However she finds that she has, in a way, circumvented this age-old woman's problem by genuinely loving her husband :

. . . Yes, she had loved him. There had been no moments when she could differentiate and say : *Then*, at such a moment I loved him. *Then* at such another, I loved him not. The stress had been constant. Her love for him had been a straight black line drawn right through her life. It had hurt her, it had damaged her, it had diminished her, but she had been unable to curve away from it. All the parts of her that were not Henry Holland's had pulled in opposition, yet by this single giant of love they had all been pulled over, as the weaker team in a tug-of-war.

But at the end of her life she meets an old admirer and she says to him :

" I assure you that if I did wrong " [in giving up her dreams for her marriage], " I paid for it. But you mustn't blame my husband."

" I don't," he replied, " According to his lights, he gave you all you could desire. He merely killed you, that's all. Men do kill women. Most women enjoy being killed, so I am told. Being a woman, I dare say that even you took a certain pleasure in the process."

For this Lady Slane has no particular answer. Except the single answer she has given in her escape from her progeny ; to live and die in her own way, at the last.

A book of fresh and simple charm, also about people whose young life is spent, is *Ebenezer Walks with God*. An old and childless working-class couple decide to adopt their infant great-grandnephew, suddenly orphaned. The result is disconcerting enough to upset their whole lives. They have their first quarrel when the baby arrives. Thereafter they grow farther and farther apart : at first it is she who loves the baby over-much, and causes agonies of jealousy to invade her husband's breast ; but after it is he who gets a strange delusion about the boy, and runs off with him.

Ebenezer, after an illness like a stroke, recovers with all but his brain. He rises up a changed man, with regard to his hitherto unquestioned and conventional attitude to life, and with a curious conviction that the little boy, Paul, is the Saviour come to earth again. He attempts to put the axiomatic precepts of the Christ of Calvary into practice and is (of course) thwarted by everybody—his wife in particular. Elizabeth's obstinacy is, indeed, difficult to believe in ; such a faithful spouse as she has been might surely have humoured, if not followed, her husband's whimsies: she becomes an ill-natured virago. But perhaps the insufferable prig and hypocrite of their local Bethel is more responsible for her actions than she is. He leads her against her husband with disastrous results. They become irrevocably separated, and

death parts them still at variance. The book would have been more artistic, and, as a matter of fact, more credible if the old couple had agreed to sink their differences in spite of the excommunicating voice of authority, and become united again through the boy. But be that as it may it contains so much genuine sweetness that its mistakes may be overlooked and its pathos and humour left to make their full appeal. Again, I find the cockneyisms of Anne Arrison very forced, and the language so over-emphasised, in the spelling, as to be almost unreadable ; yet her place in the book is excellent and she is a most desirable foil to the other characters. Elizabeth and Ebenezer are real people and their irreconcilability a genuine problem ; their emotions awake sympathy and they are written of with insight and feeling. Mr. Baker has imagination and understanding ; I wish he had not denied these to Elizabeth.

Mr. Frank Pollard has a rich and appropriate knowledge of ships, and how to sail them, to bring to his task of describing the life of a slaver, in the days of that degrading trade between Africa and America. He also has a rich and fertile knowledge of the captains and mates of such ships at sea ; and he does not stint his information of either the one or the other. His book is lively, full-blooded, gay and grim ; very readable ; not very deep ; highly coloured and wholly entertaining. To those to whom such a description appeals this amusing novel can be thoroughly recommended.

It is interesting to find out how a German sees the character of the typical Englishman " doing his job " in the outposts of civilization. But Mr. Norbert Bauer's novel, translated by Miss Annie Coath Dixey, is also a very high-minded, serious and well-written book. His descriptions of East Africa are vivid, crisp and faithful ; and the life of the planter, isolated among negroes, is extremely well rendered. This is Strickland's explanation of what he calls " tropical frenzy " :

I have come to the conclusion that hunting is the best outlet ; it seems to satisfy my evil instincts. I am a different man again afterwards, think normally again, get on well with people. . . . Well, you see, we ride off, gallop over the steppe or fight our way through the bush : I get horribly tormented by mosquitoes, horribly, but that only makes my frenzy rise. In fact a frightful rage siezes me, and not only me, everyone feels it, even those who only go into that hell for love of the chase, a rage against the animals who can live here so calmly, stark blood-thirstiness to which one gives oneself up heart and soul. One feels that they call for the hunter ; compunction doesn't come till afterwards.

Strickland's idealistic love-affair is perhaps a little unreal, but his very human back-sliding from the rigorous path of chastity is quite the best described incident in the book—there is some fine writing which raises his meeting with the enraptured black girl into a sylvan idyll.

J. E. S. ARROWSMITH

FICTION—II

MURDER PARTY. By HENRY BORDEAUX. Gollancz. 7s. 6d.

IMPERIAL TREASURE. By VAL GIELGUD. Constable. 7s. 6d.

COLLECTED GHOST STORIES. By M. R. JAMES. Arnold. 8s. 6d.

SOLANGE STORIES. By F. TENNYSON-JESSE. Heinemann. 7s. 6d.

DEAD MR. NIXON. By R. McNAIR SCOTT & T. H. WHITE. Cassell. 7s. 6d.

NO one should miss reading M. Henry Bordeaux's book, *Murder Party*, in its English dress. M. Bordeaux is an academician, which is to say that his "form," even for a Frenchman, is extraordinarily perfect, and his witty style a joy to read. The theme is briefly: a Murder-Party has been arranged by a wealthy American lady married to a French aristocrat of the most charming kind. The party invited to the romantic château above Geneva is composed of a number of celebrities from the League of Nations and the neighbourhood of Geneva on whom M. Bordeaux's wit plays with impish glee. The imaginary murder turns into real tragedy in a most unexpected way.

The author's character-drawing and subtle satire is delicious; the plot ably constructed and most economically handled. The translation is unusually successful, except in the final speech of the daughter to her father which Mr. Curtis has allowed to become somewhat stilted.

I was beginning to be afraid that the old-fashioned "thriller" had died out. But Mr. Gielgud has revived it most ably in *Imperial Treasure*, and found a new use for the Bolshevik Blunder. He has used the legend that the Czar is still alive and biding his time, for his central motive; and provides a half-Polish, half-English hero who tracks the Czar and stolen Russian gold half across the world, aided by an attractive and active American female spy. I must leave Mr. Gielgud to describe the encounters with Russian agents, Eurasian blackguards, Mongolian Napoleons: in trains, on mule-back, in aeroplanes; in the Savoy (Hotel), in Italy, in Poland, in Russia and Turkestan. He has conjured an attractive hero out of his own Polish blood, and provided a thrilling story, "steep," as he himself admits, but making for very fast reading; which is perhaps as well, since his style rather often reeks of "journalese."

Many admirers of Dr. James, the Provost of Eton, must have hoped for an "omnibus" volume of his ghost stories. At last it has arrived; and in it are included not only the well-known and often-read favourites, but a number which have appeared sporadically in Eton Ephemerals and other ways inaccessible to the general public. Good wine needs no bush and Dr. James' stories are *premier crû* and above criticism. I only wish someone would make a record of his reading of, say, *The Uncommon Prayer Book*.

Miss Tennyson-Jesse's *Solange Stories* are disappointing except for their "readability" and their clever settings. I find a female detective with intuitions which are always right a trifle uninteresting. I hope M. Bordeaux's flippant suggestion that the only successful novels by female authors are those incorporating their own first romances is unjustified. There is, however, an interesting introduction to the book in which Miss Jesse expresses her own reaction towards Mystery and Detective Stories, which give cause for thought, though I feel her conclusions are unconvincing.

Dead Mr. Nixon makes unusually good "railway reading". It is a real thriller of the "Sapper" type, and has almost more of the right ingredients than it will hold; wittily flavoured with some strangely modern touches.

FRANCIS LLOYD

BELLES-LETTRES

THE ENGLISHMAN. By W. MACNEILE DIXON. Edward Arnold. 6s.

PORTRAITS IN MINIATURE. By LYTTON STRACHEY. Chatto and Windus. 6s.

A CONVERSATION WITH A CAT AND OTHERS. By HILAIRE BELLOC.
Cassell. 7s. 6d.

OUT OF SOUNDINGS. By H. M. TOMLINSON. Heinemann. 6s.

SKETCHES IN THE LIFE OF JOHN CLARE. By HIMSELF. Cobden-Sanderson.
6s.

THE PLEASURES OF POETRY. By EDITH SITWELL. Second Series. Duckworth.
6s.

DEAR COUNTRYMEN. By S. L. BENSUSAN. John Murray. 7s. 6d.

MR. MACNEILE DIXON'S Northcliffe lectures, delivered at University College, London, in the autumn of 1929, ask more questions than they answer. They are, supposedly, a "presentment of Englishry," and an enquiry into the particular and peculiar characteristics which go to the making of the average, or, more properly, the abstract Englishman. After condemning, and how rightly, the "sea of general benevolence" which despises all nationalism, and considers patriotism a form of treason to humanity at large, he restores that "last refuge" to its age-old pinnacle, but admits that the English are guilty of certain faults. He grants them robbery as the basis of all ownership, and thieving violence as the only method of acquiring, or retaining property; greed too, and gluttony, discourtesy and an overweening pride of life; crass selfishness and innate snobbery, are English vices, but he glories over hypocrisy, perhaps the flower of our sins, and stupidity, laziness and self-satisfaction receive scant mention. Enquiring into our virtues, and into the source of our genius and our soul, Mr. Dixon decides that, as a people, we are a component of the wonder "which, so wondering, cometh to the kingdom," and expresses itself "in an enduring astonishment at our own position," and of the melancholy which meditates, with Sir Thomas Browne, on burial customs, or elegies, like Gray, among tombstones. We have, he declares, an eye for virtue and an eye for a bargain, and would enter simultaneously both those gates of the mind which stand open together, at whose entrance, Raleigh tells us, "worldly hope and ambitions crowd and jostle through, but the monitors of death and eternity meet them, and whisper in their ear." We hate reason and logic, yet are enamoured of duty, we are grim humourists and yet dull dogs—above all, we are individualists. He establishes the fact that the most typical products of our genius are the Bible and Shakespeare, yet that strange unicorn, that silent mastodon, the British gentleman, remains, in spite of Mr. Dixon, uncatalogued, and, alas, in essence undefinable. To turn from his classroom theories of the "general" Englishman, to Mr. Lytton Strachey's minutely-detailed, admirably-labelled specimens of the genus, is to turn from botany to nature study. With one, we struggle among diagrams and coloured plates, with the other, we are regarding various carefully chosen examples through a magnifying glass. Mr. Strachey contends that "a biography should be as long as Boswell's, or as short as Aubrey's", and these "portraits in miniature" of thirteen Englishmen, one Englishwoman and four foreigners famous, and not so famous, great, and not so great, are but for the most part, ten pages long. The first is

of an Elizabethan, Sir John Harrington, the last—and they are chronologically arranged—of the Victorian bishop, Creighton, and we must love them all, for we cannot but delight in those at whom we smile, and Mr. Strachey shows us, not the pilgrim soul, but the “ risible ” Don Quixote-like fool in each of his subjects : Harrington with his water-closet, Muggleton, without whom “ none salvation-knowledge hath,” John Aubrey, who, in “ Anno 1670, not far from Cirencester, met an Apparition, which, being demanded whether a Good Spirit, or a Bad ? Returned no answer, but disappeared with a curious Perfume and most melodious Twang ” ; Dr. North, for whose apoplexy a perpetual noise was prescribed, whereupon “ there was a consort of Tongs, Firegrates, Wainscote Drum and Dancing of Curtain and Curtain Rings, such as would have made a sound man mad ”—are these not all sublimely ridiculous ? Dr. Colbatch’s cry of “ Arrogat, my lord ” should move the hardest-hearted to smiling pity ; but not all Mr. Strachey’s portraits are of the vanquished : the President de Brosses was victorious over no less an adversary than the apostle of Ferney himself, and the list of Boswell’s conquests is long. The description of Mary Berry is superb pathos, but, of them all, Madame de Lieven is perhaps the most vividly alive. She was a “ maitresse-femme ” ; like Elizabeth and Victoria, she was both appealingly feminine and appallingly vital, and her intelligence and brilliance are an inspiration to Mr. Strachey’s pen. The sketches of the six historians fall quite naturally into a separate group—here are Gibbon, “ that amazing little figure . . . almost spherical,” Macaulay, a Philistine “ who was also an artist . . . squat, square, and perpetually talking on Parnassus,” Carlyle, fully qualified to be a prophet, by the possession of “ a loud voice, a bold face and a bad temper,” Froude, so “ provincially Protestant,” and, lastly, Creighton, in whom “ both the great qualities of Anglican tradition were present to a remarkable degree—it would be hard to say whether he were more distinguished as a scholar, or man of affairs.” We can only hope that, when the time comes, in the distant future, some writer may be found to preserve Mr. Strachey as admirably as he has preserved these his predecessors.

It is difficult to imagine two men whose views on life, and hopes, were more divergent, whose approaches to history were further apart, whose attitudes to the universe were more antagonistic, than Mr. Strachey and Mr. Belloc. Yet they have in common a powerful sense of the dramatic, and a sense of pity and fear, without which no man can be either historian or artist—a sense which Aristotle described once for all in the *Poetics*. *A Conversation with a Cat* is like a dumb-waiter laden with every conceivable variety of *hors-d’œuvres*: a whole meal can be made of them, and at the end there is still room for more. *Two Kings, Este, Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk*, are to be especially remembered, but how various they are !

Mr. Strachey is primarily interested in the minds and manners of persons now dead, that is to say, he is above all, an historian ; Mr. Belloc is an essayist, absorbed by whatever subject he may be writing upon ; Mr. Tomlinson, although he uses the essay form, is, one cannot help feeling, a philosopher before he is anything else. Not that his English is not beautiful, nor that in form his belles-lettres are in any way unsatisfactory, only there is a deeper gravity in them than the content would naturally imply ; there is, in each of the stories in *Out of Soundings*, a drift of pinions, *quelque chose de au delà*. Like Kenneth Grahame, he sorrows over whatsoever is ugly, and finds in sea-voyages and wrecks, in lost woods and Roman roads, the comfortable assurance and promise of beauty’s immortality. *Sea Dogs*, *Footnotes to the War Books* and *Beauty and the Beast* are the most interesting pieces in this collection, but the most moving are *The Turn of the Tide* and *The Gift*. In the first he tells how, as children, he and his companions found, in the sand on the sea-shore, a buried oak tree :

leaves and nuts and shellfish, yet the sea which drove us away ! How could such things be together ? Oak roots and a cuttlefish ! Things had got mixed. The sea was where the land used to be.

The Gift is the story of a nonconformist parson " who read the mystics, yet considered Rabelais and Tristram Shandy to be nearer the right spirit than an early father or two." He was presented, at his own request, with a microscope by his parishioners ; but was forced to resign because gazing through it at the rainbow-coloured earth made him tolerant—he would not condemn a girl who had " got into trouble." The last essay is a beautiful appreciation of Thomas Hardy.

Clare's autobiographical fragments, " the last sketch which I wrote for Taylor", which was sent to Cary, was for many years untraceable, all search for it failed, until last summer, when Miss Louisa Martin, the daughter of Clare's biographer, " communicated to the proper quarter " the fact that she possessed it—and here it is in print. Mr. Blunden has written an excellent introduction, alike historical, literary and critical, in which he sums up the main merits of the *Sketches in the Life of John Clare* as follows :

Fresh information on the early life and thoughts of a poet of the purest kind, originality of judgment, bold honesty, illuminating and otherwise unobtainable observations on intimate village life in England between 1793 and 1821, a good narrative—nearly as good as Bunyan, and plenty of picturesque expression.

Clare's tragic later life, his fight against poverty, his " isolated imaginative devotion, in his ideal love of a phantom woman, in his final battle with madness, and his cry, ' I am,' from the death-in-life of his asylum," these are not here. These sketches include letters to Taylor, and his own account of his gradual rise to fame. A quiet, good-living man, a lukewarm churchman and never a radical, peaceful and poor, with few conceits, Clare was a man of much loyalty and courage.

Miss Sitwell's volume, *The Romantic Revival*, is the second in her series, *The Pleasures of Poetry : a Critical Anthology*. In her long introduction she compares those pleasures to the joys of nature, whose texture smoothes our cheeks "like that summer weather of which we read in Gilbert White's journal, when ' strawberries (scarlet) begin to turn, young redbreasts appear. Cucumbers come in heaps.' " For 65 pages she discourses learnedly on dark vowels and light vowels, unpoignant vowels and piercing vowels, vowels that " not only alter the actual surface of the line, but widen and stretch it," on iambic monometers with full anapaestic, and on monosyllabic substitution, dimeter brachycatalectic, pause-syllables and miraculous fourteeners. She is, as the old Scotsman said of the present Archbishop of Canterbury, " fair adjectival " : bird-soft sweetness, down-dipping movement, honey-dripping sweetness, animal-purring R, dew-chilled, bird-haunted air, clay-harsh, clay-cold, uneven roughness, goat-footed female endings are but a few examples of her lavishness in this respect. The well-chosen anthology contains well-known short poems by Blake, Shelley, Keats, Coleridge, Wordsworth, and Byron, also three poems by Thomas Moore and one by George Darley.

Mr. Bensusan is always entertaining : it is hard to imagine a better railway companion, but it is difficult to believe that even in the remote wildnesses of Essex could " natives " be so " devilish clever " or " foreigners " so easily beguiled. The dialect is delicious, and Mrs. Martha Ram and Mr. Solomon Woodpecker are unforgettable characters.

ANNE FREMANTLE

LITERARY HISTORY & CRITICISM

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE : A STUDY OF FACTS AND PROBLEMS. By E. K. CHAMBERS. Two volumes. Oxford University Press. 42s.

COLERIDGE'S SHAKESPEAREAN CRITICISM. Edited by THOMAS MIDDLETON RAYSOR. Two volumes. Constable. 42s.

THE WORKS OF CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE : i. THE LIFE OF CHRISTOPHER MARLOWE, by C. F. TUCKER BROOKE, and DIDO, QUEEN OF CARTHAGE. Methuen. 8s. 6d. ii. TAMBURLAINE THE GREAT. Two parts. Edited by U. M. ELLIS FERMOR. Methuen. 10s. 6d.

SHAKESPEARE'S TRAGIC HEROES : SLAVES OF PASSION. By LILY B. CAMPBELL. Cambridge University Press. 16s.

SHAKESPEARE'S WAY. By the Right Rev. Mgr. F. C. KOLBE. Sheed and Ward. 6s.

THREE works of prime importance for students have appeared in the last few months : Sir Edmund Chambers' *William Shakespeare : a Study of Facts and Problems*, Professor T. M. Raysor's definitive edition of *Coleridge's Shakespearean Criticism*, and the first volumes of the Arden Marlowe.

Coleridge and Chambers face opposite ways. Sir Edmund's book is a study of facts and problems and therefore eschews all aesthetic criticism, though, being human, he has his own notions about Shakespeare which peer out from time to time. The work is in two volumes : the first gives Sir Edmund's conclusions and opinions on all those problems which exercise scholars ; in the second he collects records of every kind which are necessary or useful for the Shakespearean student, so that henceforth *Chambers' Shakespeare* will be as essential a book of reference as *Chambers' Elizabethan Stage*. On first reading the book is provoking ; everyone who has his own notions about Shakespeare will wish to quarrel with Sir Edmund for his negative attitude towards new ideas, but on second reading admiration increases, for the accumulation of details is enormous and Sir Edmund's conservatism sharpens the wits. In one direction the book is the " last word " on Shakespeare, nor will it be superseded as a whole unless much new material comes to light ; but in the progress of study it is likely to be the beginning of a new interest in Shakespeare's life. With the material now collected interpretation can begin afresh.

Coleridge's Shakespearean criticism has hitherto been available in an edition prepared by his nephew H. N. Coleridge, who sewed up scattered jottings into a book, often with additions or alterations of his own. Professor Raysor has now returned to the originals and reproduced them faithfully, together with accounts of Coleridge's lectures as they survive in shorthand notes or newspaper reports. He has added an interesting and valuable introduction on the course of aesthetic criticism of Shakespeare in the eighteenth century, and the influence of his predecessors on Coleridge ; the text also is illuminated with footnotes which show both wide scholarship and commendable modesty, for the editor is more concerned with illustrating his author than displaying his own erudition. Coleridge has suffered not a little in recent years, for he came before the age of research ; he knew little of Elizabethan drama and less of Elizabethan literature, and such scholarship as was available he despised. Yet after a reading of Sir Edmund Chambers' work Coleridge comes off pretty well. His

enthusiasms and reverences are at times excessive, and his lectures often digressive and long-winded ; but his jottings when he is at grips with a play, especially with a tragedy, still sparkle with uncut diamonds. His insistent claim that Shakespeare was a moral thinker and infinitely greater than his critics is a useful tonic after a surfeit of bibliography and records. Professor Raysor's edition will supersede all others, but Coleridge's notes need pruning, and students would welcome a selection of the best.

The new Arden Marlowe, like the Arden Shakespeare, is a work of composite editorship. Theoretically it is an advantage to collect a team of distinguished scholars, each to concentrate on one play ; but in practice none of them has the great advantage of having edited the whole of the author's work and each is diffident of poaching on the work of the others. Only when the General Editor is prepared to cry " holla " to his captive jades can composite editorship be successful, and the work of the General Editor seems to have been somewhat vague. A reader has a very real grievance when he finds that the biography of Marlowe is barely concerned with his plays, and that in neither of these volumes is there any attempt to show what Marlowe did for English drama or English poetry. Professor Tucker Brooke's task in writing the life was difficult, for he had to choose between a speculative and suggestive biography, which must needs be the personal interpretation of the writer, and a severe and scholarly survey of the known facts. He has compromised somewhat unhappily, so that his life has neither the scholarly concentration on facts of Dr. F. S. Boas's *Marlowe and His Circle* nor the bold speculation that made Miss Ellis-Fermor's *Marlowe* so stimulating. He does indeed suggest, but when every undocumented statement must be qualified with " doubtless," " we may easily imagine," " there is plenty of reason to infer," " it may therefore be significant " the reader is soon reduced to a state of acute scepticism. However, as all relevant documents, including the records connected with the charges of atheism made against Marlowe, are given in full, the reader can form his own opinions if he disagrees with the interpretation. Professor Tucker Brooke is not without bias ; in his anxiety to denounce the brutality of Archbishop Whitgift, he misunderstands the difficulties of the Privy Council which, at the time of Marlowe's death, had reason to believe that a vast revolutionary conspiracy was about to mature. Professor Tucker Brooke has a good word to say for Marlowe's morals, and avoids a discussion of the evidence against them ; perhaps he gives an unconscious indication of his own attitude in the interesting statement that Marlowe took his M.A. degree on 31st March, 1857 ! But he may be right. There is an interesting parallel between Marlowe and D. H. Lawrence. Had Lawrence's personal reputation been left solely in the hands of the orthodox, he would have been written down as a monster of depravity.

Miss Ellis-Fermor's edition of *Tamburlaine* is a scholarly piece of work, effectively combining learning with enthusiasm in her discussion of the sources of the Tamburlaine story and aesthetic appreciation of Marlowe's artistry. Her volume includes the two maps from Ortelius whence Marlowe drew his geography and gorgeous names; unfortunately the publishers have reproduced them on so small a scale that the names are illegible.

Miss Lily B. Campbell in her study of *Shakespeare's Tragic Heroes : Slaves of Passion* contributes an interesting account of some Elizabethan theories of psychology, particularly concerning the passions, a useful reminder that behind Elizabethan drama there was much semi-scientific speculation on the working and aberrations of the human mind. When, however, she proceeds to demonstrate that Shakespeare's tragedies are " studies " of the passions in illustration of these ideas the book is less convincing. It may be, of course, that in depicting Lear Shakespeare was conscious

of Plutarch's *Morals* ; but it is more likely that with his own eyes he had observed how old gentlemen with too much authority are apt to lack self-control. The simple truth of the matter would seem to be that people who live at the same time tend to have similar ideas and modes of expression, as to-day a hundred will talk familiarly of complex and inhibition for one who has seriously read Freud. Indeed one has only to read the extracts given from the Elizabethan psychologists and the passages quoted from the plays to realise that Shakespeare took his observations at first hand and not from text books. Nor is it remarkable if dramatists and psychologists should agree in their observations on the passions, for both are working on the same material. Miss Campbell's study was apparently written some years ago—she notes that a thesis published in 1927 was only seen when her manuscript was completed—otherwise she would doubtless have observed with interest that some of her views have been confirmed in works published before her own book appeared.

Monsignor Kolbe begins his *Shakespeare's Way* with the statement " My justification for writing a new book on Shakespeare is that I really have something new to say ! " His thesis is that :

Shakespeare secures the unity of each of his greater plays, not only by the plot, by linkage of characters, by the sweep of Nemesis, by the use of irony, and by appropriateness of style, but by the deliberate repetition throughout the play of at least one set of words or ideas in harmony with the plot. It is like the effect of the dominant note in a melody. In some of the plays there are two such sets of ideas, and then one is seen to be the dominant and the other the tonic.

The demonstration of the thesis is most interesting, and though others independently have been at work on Shakespeare's symbolism, Monsignor Kolbe substantiates his claims to have something new to say. This book is one of several symptoms of a growing revolt against the conception of Shakespeare the Man of Business, and a return to Coleridge's idea of Shakespeare as the great philosopher.

G. B. HARRISON

BIOGRAPHY AND MEMOIRS

MARSHAL LYAUTEY. By ANDRÉ MAUROIS. Translated by HAMISH MILES. Lane. 12s. 6d.

LIFE OF A SEAMAN : THOMAS COCHRANE. By E. G. TWITCHETT. Wishart. 12s. 6d.

HENRY DUNDAS, FIRST VISCOUNT MELVILLE. By HOLDEN FURBER. Oxford University Press. 16s.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE. By I. B. O'MALLEY. Thornton Butterworth. 21s.

ELIZABETH FRY'S JOURNEYS ON THE CONTINENT, 1840-41. From the diary of Elizabeth Gurney. Edited by BRIMLEY JOHNSON. Lane. 12s. 6d.

ONE had always suspected that there must be something more subtle and elusive in the character of Marshal Lyautey than appeared in the panegyrics in the English press. It was plain that a Westerner (and he was that, every inch of him) who could not only conquer Arabs and Berbers on the field of battle, but could, with equal ease, bend them to his will at the council table, extorting from them love and admiration no less than fear, must have some very exceptional quality of a kind little associated with strong men of action. He must have had something of that "passionate and gentle greatness" which Joseph Conrad attributed to Nelson. He must have set himself to conquer men's hearts no less than their countries. He must have been sensitive, tender, vain; as well as ruthless, determined and patriotically unselfish. He must have known exactly when to drop his sword and take up cajolery instead. And, having little of Pierre Loti's sentimental love of the East, he must have possessed all these qualities in an amazingly high degree to have exercised them so successfully upon Orientals.

All that was fairly obvious. We only waited to hear it said. But we were not quite prepared—at any rate on this side of the Channel—for the wonderfully dramatic, clear-cut and satisfying portrait of this many-sided man which M. Maurois has now produced. Brought up in an old-fashioned, French Royalist family, his youthful soul surrendered to a whole gallery of "lost causes and impossible beliefs," Lyautey began his military career in the service of the Republic with some vague idea of proving to the world that an officer was not necessarily a mere fighting machine, but might listen to music, read books, give a lead in social service. And in this blind alley he wasted much of his time, until he was sent to Tonking, met the Governor, General Galliéni, and discovered at last a practical object in life. In his copy of Montesquieu he underlined this passage on the methods of Alexander the Great :

He left the vanquished races not only their manners, but also their civil law, and often even the Kings and governors whom he had found. He respected ancient traditions, and it was in order to preserve everything that he strove to conquer everything.

That was the method which Lyautey learned from Galliéni at Tonking and applied so triumphantly in Morocco. It is a method which was familiar enough to the ancient Romans, and is applied to-day in miniature all over the world by British officials. But Lyautey, with his vivid, modern French intelligence, seized upon it and made it, not a mere convenience, a line of least resistance, but a doctrine; and by it saved Morocco for France.

On the battlefield he was terrible, in the salon irresistible. He has been accused of "coquetry" (by one of his own officers, in an anonymous character sketch left on the table in his tent), but in fact he was quite openly and frankly "out" to charm everyone he met. It was part of his method. On the rare occasions when it failed he was broken-hearted. At first he rather liked the English. "Like them he had a feeling for style, the sense of caste, a liking for rather wild flights of fancy going hand in hand with a love of tradition: Revolutionary Conservatives—such are the grave English" (a bold translation here by Mr. Hamish Miles). Later, it is to be feared, Lyautey's affection for us sensibly cooled. Perhaps if we had known about him a little sooner—if this brilliant character sketch, for instance, had appeared ten years ago—his great and lovable personality might have been almost as popular in England as in France. It should be added that Mr. Hamish Miles, in his usual effortless style, has avoided all appearance of a translation, while taking surprisingly few liberties with the text.

Cochrane, a hundred years before Lyautey, gave a "star turn" exhibition of a type of man of action almost unknown in any country but this—the quarrelsome, rebellious, radical aristocrat. Mr. Twitchett deals with him faithfully and well. He displays his many weaknesses, his truculence, his preoccupation with politics, his fatal habit of arguing the point with superior officers—all of which must be carefully weighed in the balance against his gifts of leadership before we can understand how so great a man as Jervis could have disliked and despised him. For it must never be forgotten that the same naval authorities who hesitated to give Lord Cochrane any important command took the comparatively insignificant Captain Nelson to their hearts in spite of his numerous acts of insubordination. They forgave Nelson every time; but they sensed something in Cochrane which they felt must be kept in check. It is hard, at this distance of time, to condemn them. Mr. Twitchett, at any rate, does not do so. He is content to give us the facts and leave us to judge for ourselves.

This detachment does not prevent the book from being one of the keenest, and liveliest, and most convincing biographical studies that I have read for a long time. The truth is that Cochrane, though he argued so much himself, is not a suitable subject for argument. He is a "might-have-been"—perhaps the greatest of naval "might-have-beens"—and therefore the moment you begin discussing him you find yourself in a castle in Spain, arguing with a horse-marine about something that never happened. What would have been the result if he had ever been allowed to command a British fleet in action is a speculation which Mr. Twitchett rightly refuses to waste his time upon. He does remark that Cochrane "became inured to no form of warfare which he did not brilliantly adorn"; and he adds that "one of the saddest spectacles in the bird's-eye view of the naval historian is his restless hovering round the preparations for the battle of Navarino, in which he was denied any part at all." That is true enough. We might have found a second Nelson in Cochrane—with something less than Nelson's genius in command, but with an inventive ingenuity (he thought of barbed wire and smoke screens half a century before their time) which Nelson never possessed. But what we have instead is the greatest naval free lance in our history—a man who could mend his own ship's pumps, make his own explosives, put the first steam-driven ship on the Pacific and the first lithographic printing press in South America, lead a boarding party, draw up a political constitution, write his indignant resignation to some "dago" government—and all in the day's work. That is something. And Mr. Twitchett, very rightly, has been content to show us this Cochrane that we have, instead of flying to others that we know not of. I applaud his decision. And I note, at the same time, the skill with which he has

marshalled the facts in his necessarily crowded pages, so that we never realise how much we are being made to absorb.

That conscientious and efficient statesman, Henry Dundas, first Viscount Melville, who held office during those dangerous years at the end of the eighteenth and beginning of the nineteenth centuries, has found a cool yet sympathetic biographer in Dr. Holden Furber. Dr. Furber is an American, and he has been able to make use of the Melville papers, which have recently been sold at Sotheby's in separate "lots" and over a period of several years without any historian having been given the opportunity of studying them. The result is much new evidence, and Dr. Furber has very wisely limited himself to those parts of Melville's career to which this new evidence applies. In particular he is able to throw much new light upon the suppression of "Jacobinism" in Scotland, for which Dundas was responsible, and to defend his subject, very successfully, against the charge of political malevolence.

The chief interest in Miss O'Malley's new "life" of Florence Nightingale is the careful study of her early life, of which not enough has been said in the past. It goes far to explain what followed. Florence was always writing, mainly about herself, and she left behind her a mountain of papers which Miss O'Malley seems to have explored pretty thoroughly. We get a picture of a tense, vivid, little woman, a personification of what we mean by the term "live wire," who never knew quite what she wanted to do, yet always cried out passionately that she must do something :

Oh, how I have longed for a trial to give me food, to be something real. A nourishing life—that is the happiness whatever it be. A starving life, that is the real trial. My God, what am I to do ? Teach me, tell me.

After those early soul storms even the Crimea seems like a placid lake.

In striking contrast with this restless, hungry reformer of hospitals is that placid prison reformer, Elizabeth Fry, whose niece, Elizabeth Gurney, kept the travel diary of their voyages in Holland together, which Mr. Brimley Johnson has edited. In spite of her forceful personality and her gift for getting things done, Elizabeth Fry, as we see her here through her niece's eyes, had a placidity which must often have been exasperating to the victims of her reforming zeal. But the book succeeds not as a study in psychology, but as a chance collection of travel notes, made by a young woman of character and humour. Elizabeth Gurney had a quick eye and a real zest for travel ; she liked the Dutch, but could always see the funny side of them ; and her own spirited little black and white sketches, which she made on the road, are an added attraction in this book.

CLENNELL WILKINSON